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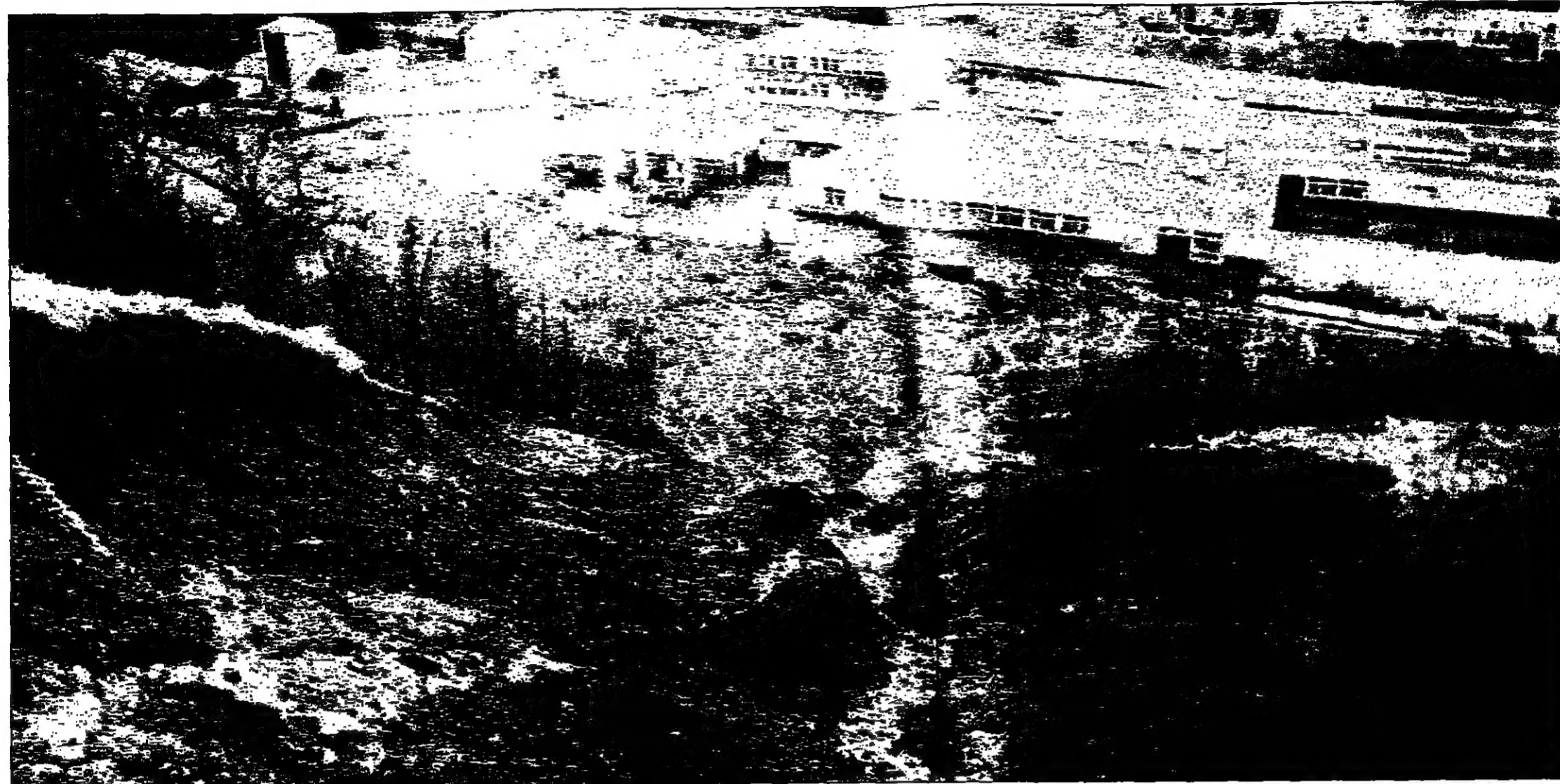
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THE TIMES

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THURSDAY DECEMBER 3 1992

45p



Creeping swamp: a 100ft high tip dumped tons of mud and slurry across Tredegar comprehensive school playground in Gwent before dawn. In places it was three feet deep and within yards of classrooms

Coal tip avalanche threatens school near Aberfan

By MICHAEL HORSNELL

A BLACK avalanche of slurry from a 100ft coal tip, undermined by days of heavy rain, descended on a school yesterday six miles from Aberfan, reviving memories of the disaster in the Welsh village where 144 died in 1966.

On a day when 80mph gales and lasting rain again hit Wales and the south of England, more than 3,000 tons from the disused Ty Trist pit cascaded into the grounds of the 950-pupil Tredegar comprehensive school in Gwent before dawn.

The school was built 20 years ago on the reclaimed site of the old NCB colliery, which closed in the 1950s, and the building is only 50 yards from the tip.

Colin Warfield, assistant caretaker of the school, who helped in the Aberfan rescue operation, said: "My first thought was 'Oh God, not again.' It brought my nightmares all back."

The grounds of the school were buried in up to six feet of slurry, which came to a halt at the school entrance. The school's museum of mining history, a loaded coal truck and 30 trees planted by pupils were all swept away.

An emergency operation was mounted to sandbag the building to prevent classrooms from flooding as water lay two feet deep in the yard. Gordon Davies, the headmaster, who ordered children to stay away while the slurry was cleared, said: "It was awesome. Any adult or child standing in the way would have had no chance of survival. The first thing that crossed my mind was Aberfan. A couple of hours later and the children would have been at school."

An enquiry was ordered by Gwent County Council, which is responsible for the tip. Continued on page 2, col 1

Forecast, page 20

Windsor safari park sold to Legoland

By NICK NUTTALL

THE animals of Windsor safari park will be replaced by Lego bricks under plans for a £60m theme park. Lego Group of Copenhagen announced yesterday that it had paid an undisclosed sum for the safari park, which went into receivership in October.

It expects to attract 1.2 million visitors a year to a theme park, which should open in 1996 and may include huge models of St Paul's Cathedral and nearby Windsor Castle. Up to 600 people will be employed there.

The park's 600 animals, which include 40 big cats, a killer whale, elephants, bears, rhinoceroses, hippopotamuses and baboons, are expected to be re-housed at zoos across Europe and America during the next 12 months.

The purchase is likely to be seen with a touch of irony by British toy manufacturers, as Lego was a British idea. Peter Ambeck-Madsen, director of information at Lego Group, said yesterday: "The first two bricks made in Denmark in 1949 were inspired by two bricks made by the British company, Kiddykraft."

UK ready to back air strikes on Serbs

By NICHOLAS WOOD AND MICHAEL BINYON

BRITAIN is ready to back limited military action in Bosnia-Herzegovina to counter Serbian aggression.

Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, is understood to have been angered by the failure of diplomatic and trade sanctions to halt the fighting, and is prepared to endorse UN-sanctioned intervention to enforce the no-fly zone over Bosnia. Airfields under the control of Bosnian Serbs could then be bombed and its aircraft shot down if they continued to flout the air embargo.

The government's tougher stance comes as Western governments prepare for a new international conference in Geneva to step up the pressure on the Serbs, as the Western European Union recommended that it should plan for a possible European intervention, and as an emergency gathering of 47 Islamic nations meeting in Jeddah called for a free flow of arms to the embattled Bosnian Muslims so they could defend themselves.

But Lord Owen and Cyrus Vance, the Geneva peace negotiators, yesterday rejected the Islamic foreign ministers' call for military action, saying that resorting to force would only aggravate the situation.

The international conference on December 16 will

bring together 33 countries, including all those who attended the London conference on Yugoslavia as well as more Muslim countries, and will be attended by Lawrence Eagleburger, the acting American secretary of state. It is likely to see a much more hawkish attitude from the European Community, which will discuss the Bosnian war at length at the Edinburgh summit next week.

British sources said yesterday there was a perception that things were getting worse and more must be done to stop Serbian aggression. Yesterday, a Danish member of the UN peacekeeping force was kidnapped by an armed gang in Croat-held territory near Sarajevo, and continued fighting prevented aid reaching the city. "This weighs heavily on the people of Sarajevo," Peter Kessler, spokesman for the UN High Commissioner on Refugees, said. "We aren't getting a chance to stockpile food for the winter."

The Foreign Office is particularly concerned about the way the Bosnian Serbs are using helicopters to transport senior officers involved in the bloodshed, although it has no evidence of any bombing raids by Serbian planes. But besides some 200 violations of the no-fly zone, Western nations have been angered by continued "ethnic cleansing", the breach of ceasefire agreements and non-co-operation with UN peace negotiators.

Mr Hurd now wants to strengthen the co-ordinated EC approach to resolving the conflict. He wants an agreement at the Edinburgh summit that can be presented to the Americans and the international conference.

Britain's tough approach came as senior ministers detected a hardening in America's attitude to the conflict. One minister said he believed that Bill Clinton, the president-elect, may be preparing for a more assertive stance and another senior Tory thought a "Bush-Clinton" axis might be replacing the more cautious approach taken by Mr Bush and James Baker, his former secretary of state.

The shift also coincided with

a call from Paddy Ashdown for air strikes against Serbian artillery. Condemning the government's "timidity", he said the international community should "draw a line on further Serb advances".

However, defence ministers are deeply apprehensive about any moves that would increase Britain's commitment of 2,400 troops charged with protecting humanitarian convoys in Bosnia. One said that Bosnia was a "quagmire" in which it would all too easy for British and other Western forces to become bogged down in an unwinnable war.

Contingency planning within the defence ministry against a Serbian strike against Kosovo and Macedonia is nevertheless under way. Ministers accept that such an escalation of the conflict, bringing in Greece, would trigger a "nasty" European war from which Britain and its allies could not stand apart.

Whitehall officials yesterday played down talk of a division between the Foreign Office and the defence ministry over military intervention, and said the government was still keenly aware of the disadvantages of sending in troops: the implications for the aid effort, the likely reaction from the combatants and the difficulties of withdrawal.

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Militant mood, page 13

Major dampens summit hopes

By PHILIP WEBSTER, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

JOHN Major last night played down expectations of success at next week's Edinburgh summit as he prepared to table new proposals today aimed at enabling the Danes to hold a second referendum on the Maastricht treaty.

After visiting more than half the capitals of the European Community as he tries to broker a deal on at least six key issues, Mr Major returned from Copenhagen last night and authorised his officials to deliver a downbeat assessment of the prospects of a breakthrough next week.

"We are a long way apart on a number of issues," a senior government official, who has been travelling with Mr Major, said. The prime minister was reported to have likened the mass of interlocking difficulties facing him as the EC president to "trying to solve a Rubik's Cube". The official added: "The problem with Rubik's Cubes is that most of the time you don't manage to solve them." He said he would not use the word "optimistic" to describe Britain's view of the summit's prospects.

The cautious predictions were designed to reduce the political damage of failure and to enhance the potential gain of success or partial agreement. Even so it was clear from British briefings and the reaction of other EC governments that serious hurdles remain to be overcome.

The biggest obstacles to an agreement were reported to be a deal on future financing,

where the Community's poorer southern states are at loggerheads with the paymasters of Britain, France and Germany, and the Danish question.

Mr Major today will propose ways of dealing with Denmark's demands for opt-outs on the defence, citizenship, monetary union and justice provisions of the Maastricht treaty.

Continued on page 2, col 4

Euro-rebels, page 9
EC unity call, page 10

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Parents return 'wrong' baby

By LIN JENKINS

PARENTS of an eight-day-old baby have returned the infant to hospital after being told they might have taken home the wrong child.

The parents of another child born on the same day have agreed to look after the baby they took home until blood tests confirm the parentage of both children. Results of the tests might not be known for a fortnight.

The possibility of a mix-up was discovered when one set of parents arrived home on Friday with a baby girl and found the surname on her identity tag was not theirs. The parents of the second baby were then contacted by staff from the Princess Anne Maternity Hospital in Southampton. John Miller, clinical director of the hospital, yes-

terday announced an enquiry. "It will be carried out by an independent group of midwives from outside the area," he said.

Both baby girls, born within a couple of hours of each other on November 24, and both mothers had blood tests on Sunday. The samples have been taken to two private specialist laboratories. A hospital spokesman said: "It will take between a week and a fortnight to do all the tests in order to be 100 per cent sure. You can get tests done more quickly, but the reliability is not so high and the parents and hospital believe it is better to be accurate."

Ann Wilson, head of nursing and midwifery and acting manager at the hospital, had the difficult task of breaking

the news to the parents on Friday evening. "One set of parents were very understanding but the others, although understanding, were more angry about it, although they are calm now," she said.

Babies at the hospital are normally tagged on both the wrist and the ankle while in the delivery room. The baby with the wrong name attached to her ankle when she arrived home had only one tag remaining. The other child had the correct name on the wrist tag and the wrong name on the ankle tag.

Mr Miller said he thought the error could have happened when the babies were moved from their mothers' bedsides to a nearby nursery.

Baby mix-up, page 3

Cammell Laird to shut with 900 job losses

By PATRICIA TEHAN

NINE hundred jobs are to go from the Cammell Laird shipyard in Birkenhead when the last conventional submarine, HMS Unicorn, finishes next July.

The threat of closure has been hanging over the yard for two years, since its owner, VSEL, which also runs the Barrow-in-Furness shipyard, put it up for sale. No buyer was found. VSEL now plans to seek planning permission for mixed industrial, retail and residential use.

Noel Davies, VSEL's chief executive, said the closure was "the consequence of government policy". He said that warship commissions had dried up and attacked the govern-

ment and the European Community for refusing to allow Cammell Laird access to the EC Shipbuilding Intervention Fund, which would have provided subsidies to allow the yard to compete with rivals in the Far East for orders for merchant ships.

The GMB general union described the closure of the yard as "the end of an era for Merseyside". Peter Horan, GMB regional secretary in Liverpool, said: "Today's announcement is not just about the loss of jobs, but the loss of highly skilled people who are needed to help get Britain out of recession."

Warship yard, page 6

كندا من اجل

Coal tip avalanche descends on school

Continued from page 1
Safety experts found that water from the mountain behind Tredgar had overwhelmed its normal courses and was diverted towards the school.

The tip collapsed shortly before the school opened in 1972. Worried parents complained then to the government and were assured by Margaret Thatcher, then education secretary, that the old tip was safe.

Steve Taylor, aged 40, who took his son Sean, 13, to school before discovering the extent of the near-disaster, said: "I couldn't believe my eyes when I saw the mountain had moved in a big V-shape. This could have come down at any time."

A Gwent council spokeswoman said: "The school will stay closed for the time being. Investigations are still going on. There is a massive clean-up operation. Engineers have told us there is now no danger of further slippage."

Winds of more than 80mph lashed southern Britain leaving a trail of damage and chaos as weathermen warned that more storms were on the way. The south and south Wales again saw the worst of the weather as the battering caused flooding,



Flood barrier: workmen trying to hold back flood waters from the Taff river threatening houses in Pontypridd, south Wales

blocked roads and landslides.
□ An RAF helicopter searching for a man washed over the sea wall in Blackpool in high winds found a body on the beach at the resort. Darren Sadler, 25, of Manor Drive, Cleveleys, Lancs, disappeared in the early hours of the

morning while he was with a friend on the North Shore.
□ In south Wales, where roads and railway lines were blocked, 11 rivers were at "red" danger levels and firemen were battling to keep water out of homes and businesses in the area's second

deluge this week.
□ The London Weather Centre said more rain and high winds were sweeping toward Britain from the Atlantic. Two depressions travelling 600 miles apart will keep conditions poor until next week at least, with the West

Country and Wales again likely to be the first to suffer.
□ Six walkers missing overnight on Dartmoor were found safe by rescuers while two people were slightly hurt when a train ploughed into a landslide in Cumbria. The Carlisle to Leeds train was at

Culgaith near Penrith when it hit the blockage at the end of a cutting.
□ The RAC yesterday set up a hotline number for travellers wishing to avoid the worst affected areas: 0891 333 585.

Forecast, page 20

MI5 urged to take quicker command of anti-IRA fight

By Christopher Elliott and Michael Horsney

MOVES to speed up the handover of primary responsibility in fighting IRA terrorism from Scotland Yard's Special Branch to MI5 were urged last night.

Frustrated members of the anti-terrorist squad and provincial Special Branch officers are concerned that, although the first steps towards the new system were taken on October 1, it may take up to two years for a real difference to be felt.

One officer said last night: "If someone was to ask me whether the new system was working I would have to say what new system?"

Frustration has been heightened by the discovery of a blue Transit van packed with half a ton of homemade explosives at 7.30 on Tuesday evening in Stephen Street, off the Tottenham Court Road in London's West End.

The van was found after a series of coded warnings at 7.05pm that four bombs planted between Tottenham Court Road and Oxford Street were due to go off within half an hour. Police would not comment yesterday on whether

the bomb's detonator had failed.

It was the fifth big bomb laid in London in the present campaign using homemade explosives. The previous four — in the City of London and at Staples Corner in April; in a Volvo lorry stopped in North London on November 13; and in a Transit van at Canary Wharf 72 hours later — contained about a ton each.

Between 16 and 18 tons of fertiliser would have been used to make the bombs, designed to cause maximum damage in a way that more precise commercial explosives such as Semtex cannot. It is the nitrate within the fertiliser, extracted using coffee grinders, that provides explosive power.

The question for the security services and the police is whether that manufacturing process is being undertaken on the mainland or in Ireland.

About 2.5 million tons of ammonium nitrate fertiliser, which has been banned in Northern Ireland for 20 years, are sold in Britain every year. According to Jim Reed, director-general of the United

Kingdom Agricultural Supply Trade Association (UKASTA), 200 to 250 companies sell fertiliser.

Most farmers place orders by telephone with their local merchants and have the fertiliser delivered. It is most commonly delivered in 500kg bags.

Mr Reed says there is no legal bar on "cash and carry" sales to buyers who turn up in person at the merchant's premises; however, UKASTA members have been under standing instructions since the City bomb to take note of customers' names, addresses and vehicle registration numbers.

"I think you can take it that any strange men with Irish accents asking for fertiliser would be pretty swiftly reported to the local police," Mr Reed said. "Local merchants have a good idea of all the farmers in their area."

One theory is that fertiliser is being stolen and then processed in deserted farm buildings, possibly in the Home Counties to allow close access to London.

Current police thinking is that the bombs are prepared in Ireland, then shipped over. In the seventies the IRA delivered explosives to the heart of London using haulage firms that had legitimate daily business there.

But there are risks for the terrorists using homemade explosives. The last three bombs have been captured virtually intact, providing important evidence for the police. The IRA, as a result, may switch tactics again, firebombing stores or targeting other cities.

Yesterday Paul Condon, who takes over as Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police on February 1, said there was no "quick fix" to combating the Provisional IRA's terrorist campaign on the mainland. "It is a long-term issue. There is not a new commissioner or formula that is dramatically going to have an impact. There has to be realism about what is going to be achieved without turning London into a fortress."

Yard's new chief, page 5
Diary, page 16

Council charge 'will cause as much chaos as poll tax'

By Rachel Kelly, Local Government Correspondent

THE council tax threatens to be plagued with the same administrative problems that affected its predecessor, the poll tax, according to a report from the Consumers' Association published today.

The report described the government's approach to house valuations, which places homes into eight bands to determine the level of council tax paid, as "cheap and cheerful" and bound to lead to inaccuracies.

Valuations were carried out by the Inland Revenue valuation office or by estate agents, who in England were paid on average only £1.58 for each valuation.

"The lowest payment was around 20p per property, which had led to jokes about 'second-gear' valuations with agents valuing houses from the comfort of their cars," the report says.

Valuations assumed that houses were freehold, flats were on a 99-year lease, and that the property was in a state of reasonable repair. Such assumptions could cause "confusion", the report said.

Householders could also be in for a nasty surprise because the tax's banding levels are based on house prices that are already nearly two years out of date, since when house prices have fallen by about ten per cent, the association says. But that won't provide homeowners with grounds for appeal against valuations.

"The number of people affected by this apparent inequity could increase, since there is no agreement about

when properties will be revalued," the report says.

The government has no plans for a national revaluation of properties, but homes will be revalued when they are sold. Councils are worried that areas with falling house prices, particularly in London and the South East, will still have to pay the same level of council tax because bandings will not get extra money from central government in revenue support grant to make up the difference in the future.

The report adds that appeals could take an unacceptably long time: up to six months.

Tony Travers, a local government expert from the London School of Economics, said if houses were revalued today, there would be a redistribution from the North, where prices have fallen only slightly, to the South, where prices have fallen by ten per cent.

But he cautioned that the Consumers' Association's message was a bit too pessimistic. "In terms of viability, this tax is much better than the poll tax. It is easier to administer, and more likely to work."

A spokesman from the environment department defended the valuation system and said: "The valuations had to make certain assumptions and had to start on a certain date. If you start taking into account all these other factors, it becomes an unworkable system."

Diary, page 16

£1bn earnings tied to Sellafield go-ahead

By Michael McCarthy, Environment Correspondent

MORE than £1 billion in advance earnings may have to be paid back to foreign customers if the government cancels British Nuclear Fuels' Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant (Thorp) at Sellafield, Cumbria, the plant's director said yesterday.

Thorp is built but awaiting an operating licence from Michael Howard, the environment secretary. The total cost of not going ahead would be "billions" of pounds, said David Bonser, director of British Nuclear Fuels' Thorp division.

In addition, 2,500 tonnes of spent fuel from nuclear power stations, mainly in Germany and Japan, and already on the site for reprocessing would have to be returned to the countries of origin, mainly Germany and Japan. Mr Bonser said.

Mr Bonser's disclosures underline the dilemma facing the government over the Thorp plant, which was given the go-ahead after a public enquiry in 1977. Its future is being increasingly questioned within Whitehall as well as by the environmental lobby, mainly because of the plutonium that the plant will recover

from spent fuel and return to its foreign customers.

Critics fear the plutonium may add to the danger of nuclear weapons proliferation although BNFL said it would not produce weapons-grade material.

Mr Bonser said it was "inconceivable from an economic point of view" to build and then not operate such a plant.

It has cost about £1.85 billion with nearly another £1 billion being spent on associated "downstream" plants.

About £2 billion of the total cost has already been provided in advance payments from overseas customers, he said.

If the plant did not go ahead, "at least many tens of millions of pounds" would have to be paid back, under the contracts British Nuclear Fuels had signed, and the total amount that would have to be repaid was likely to exceed £1 billion, depending on court cases. The spent fuel from overseas that the plant was built to reprocess into reusable uranium and plutonium and waste would have to be returned. "We have no contracts for long-term storage," Mr Bonser said.

House plays host to a more aggressive class of beggar

Matthew Parris
Political Sketch

Travellers to Westminster whose terminus is Waterloo station may have the misfortune of crossing the Thames on foot over the pedestrian walkway on Hungerford railway bridge. There they will be assailed by various unshaven gentlemen down on their luck, many with Glaswegian accents, launching from behind girders or growing from the benches near the stone steps, these unfortunates beleaguering passers-by with garbled tales of woe, demanding the price of a cup of tea, and roundly cursing all who fail to provide it.

Should our traveller continue his journey, another seven hundred yards will take him into the Chamber of the House of Commons. Should he be unlucky, the parliamentary business will relate to the government's spending plans for Scotland.

He will then re-live his experience on Hungerford bridge. A wild-eyed assortment of Celts will leap from their benches on the opposition side, describing their woes in violent language, demanding money with menaces, and damning ministers, Tories and — by insinuation — the whole English race as the author of their misfortunes. Recalling his recent acquaintances on Hungerford bridge, our traveller will reflect that the Scots do it with more style in the Commons, but not much.

Yesterday — you will have gathered — the Scottish secretary, Ian Lang, announced in parliament the government's public expenditure plans for Scotland. Reasonable men could argue about whether these plans were generous or adequate. An increase of 3 per cent in real terms in spending on Scotland takes total spending per head there to 30 per cent more than in England.

Henry McLeish, however, Labour's Scottish spokesman yesterday, called it a "real tragedy". It was complacent. It was rank hypocrisy. It was a lethal cocktail. It didn't add up. It did nothing. Problems were mounting by the day, crime stalked our streets...

And so on. "All we get is £23m housing investment in Scottish Homes," Shaking with rage and resuming his seat Mr McLeish omitted to ask for the price of a cup of tea, but was cheered lustily by his compatriots for a convincing performance. By way of reply, Mr Lang made

some mild remarks about real increases on road-spending, a Scottish NHS which was 47 per cent better funded than in 1979 and an 11.6 per cent increase on law and order. He yielded to the opposition benches. If you had thought McLeish unapologetic, now began the real caterwauling.

Jimmy Wray (Glasgow, Provost) found the statement "misleading". Jimmy Hood (Lab, Clydesdale) saw "not one penny extra". Ian Davidson (Glasgow, Govan), moustache bristling, found it "far, far too little". What hope, he asked, for the young unemployed, the elderly in fear of crime, and people in damp houses?

John Mackinnon (Glasgow, Cathcart) thought it "did nothing". Michael Martin (Glasgow, Springburn) spoke of "terrible rain, penetration and dampness". Eric Clarke (Midlothian) convicted Lang of "the sin of omission: he has omitted so many of the things we wanted to see". Tommy Graham (Renfrew W & Inverclyde), three chins-a-wobble, found Scottish sewage in a terrible state and water barely fit to drink.

In Kilmarnock and McKelvey (William McKelvey) schools were "crumbling". From Dundee E. (John McAllion) was so angry about the "crime wave sweeping the country" that he started shouting and stabbing his finger at Mr Lang before the latter could even reply. Gently, George Foulkes (Carrick, Dumfries and Galloway) spoke of the "Scottish Secretary and his sycophantic acolytes" then began to shout too.

Andrew Welsh (Angus E) judged that the "woefully inadequate" Lang had "let Scotland down again". Nigel Griffiths (Edinburgh S) had visited hospital wards where nurses had no time for tea-breaks and found "despair". Summing up, Henry McLeish examined this £1 billion increase and found it to involve "massive cuts".

Finally, an Englishman rose. Barry Porter (C. Wirral S) told the Chamber that the North West of England had "twice the population of Scotland, and on the evidence of this afternoon, twice the intelligence".

Porter, who did not have the price of a cup of tea, resumed his seat to a sea of stalling fingers and a great barrage of Scottish howls.

BT to cut prices for frequent callers

BT has announced price changes aimed at cutting charges for frequent phone users but the average customer will see bills increase by £5 as line rental prices rise. BT said yesterday that it will freeze call charges for a year from January next year and announce a package of discount options for customers who make many calls.

BT said the changes were designed to encourage people to make more use of their phones. Britons currently spend an average of four minutes in every 24 hours on the phone compared with six minutes in America. Of the telecommunications regulator, told BT that it must cut its prices by another 2.1 per cent before July if it is to meet the requirements of its price control formula.

Ringing the changes, page 22
City comment, page 25

Ransom cash found

Police unearthed £140,000 of the Stephanie Slater ransom last night near a railway at Easton, Lincolnshire. The money had been missing since February when Miss Slater, a Birmingham estate agent, was kidnapped. She was released after the payment of £175,000. Seismic engineers using an electronic detector helped police to find the money.

Rothschild takes post

Lord Rothschild has become president of the Institute of Jewish Affairs, the leading research body into Jewish political and social matters. It is the first time he has accepted such a post. Lord Rothschild said he was particularly concerned about the rise of anti-Semitism.


Profile, page 14

Accident care criticised

More than 100,000 people a year in Britain suffer serious disabilities that could be avoided by better treatment after accidents, a report by the British Orthopaedic Association says. Tom Sackville, junior health minister, said that his department, which was carrying out a study of the treatment of major trauma, would consider the report carefully.

Coroner's drugs plea

A coroner yesterday gave warning of the danger of mixing drugs with alcohol after the death of Dr David Widgery, 45, a GP in Hackney, east London, who was found in his study in October. He died after vomiting and choking, caused by taking alcohol and a painkiller. Dr Douglas Chambers, the Poplar coroner, recorded a verdict of misadventure.



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EC summit optimism dampened

Continued from page 1
tricht treaty. He has had to reconcile Denmark's desire for legally binding safeguards with the desire of the rest of EC to avoid changes that would mean a renegotiation of the treaty.

Although the detail of the British proposal has not been published, Mr Major is expected to propose a special declaration at Edinburgh that would not amend the treaty but be taken alongside it. Officials said there were "very difficult" issues at stake, with some countries demanding equal treatment if any special privileges were granted to Denmark and others insisting that any legally binding changes granted to Denmark would have to be ratified. The issue will go before the pre-summit meeting of EC foreign ministers on Tuesday.

Officials emphasised that most of the main issues facing the summit — Denmark, future financing, enlargement of the EC, subsidiarity, opening up the decision-making process, and the economy — were linked. Denmark has said that its chances of getting a "yes" vote in the second referendum would be helped by getting the talks under way on enlarging the EC to take in the old European Free Trade Association countries.

Poul Schluter, the Danish prime minister, said: "We must find a solution which does not require a new ratification process in other countries. I do think we will find a solution which is legally binding and acceptable to all 12 EC members."

Enro-rebels, page 9
EC unity call, page 10

Hospital baby mix-up prompts national review of birth tags

By LIN JENKINS

HOSPITALS throughout the country are to check their procedure for tagging new-born babies after the possibility of a mix-up at a maternity hospital in Southampton.

While an independent enquiry will try to establish what went wrong, the Princess Anne Maternity Hospital is aware of one child who bore the name of different parents on each of her two identity tags. The mistake was discovered only after another child had been taken home and was found to have the wrong surname on the identity tag still attached.

The parents of the two girls born within hours of each other last week will have to wait up to two weeks for the results of blood tests to determine parentage.

Rigorous procedures were introduced in all hospitals in 1971 after two baby girls were sent home with the wrong mothers from Morriston Hospital, Swansea. Since then, identity tags have been put on babies before they leave the delivery room. The tags are written out and shown to the mother to confirm they are correct before being attached

to the baby's wrist or ankle. In some hospitals, such as the one in Southampton, two identity tags are used, attached to the wrist and ankle. If the child is to be delivered by Caesarian section, the mother is asked to check the name on the tag before she is given a general anaesthetic.

Joe Jordan, spokesman for the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, said hospitals took the procedure very seriously and would be checking to ensure it was being operated correctly. "It is a mistake that everybody dreads, but I cannot see how it could happen these days," he said.

He added that while no system was foolproof, with 600,000 babies born each year he could not recall the last time there had been a mix-up. Should one occur, the baby's identity can be confirmed with blood or DNA tests.

In the case that prompted the change in procedure, it was discovered that a mother had taken home the wrong baby only after the child was found to have a heart defect and was given a blood test.

In July 1986, two mothers

took home each other's baby from the Freedom Field's Hospital in Plymouth, Devon, but discovered their mistake when they saw that the identity tags bore the wrong names.

The most celebrated case was in 1936 when Blanche Rylatt and Margaret Wheeler brought up each other's daughter after they were mixed up at a Nottingham nursing home. Mrs Wheeler had been convinced that she had taken home the wrong child, but staff at the nursing home refused to believe her, and it was only seven years later when she was allowed access to the records that she could prove her suspicions.

Since so much time had passed the two mothers decided not to tell the girls. However, they kept in touch and their daughters grew up knowing their real mothers as "aunt".

Years later, when Mrs Wheeler spoke about her decision, she said: "For a while I was deeply upset. I felt that I wanted both children. Now I feel as though I didn't lose a daughter, but gained one, that I have two daughters and two families."

The anguish of such mistakes was dramatically illustrated in 1986 when an Irish family was forced to take a child after another couple refused to believe it was not theirs.

The baby boys had been given the wrong name tags at Portlaoise General Hospital. One couple refused to believe a mistake had occurred, and only after being compelled to undergo blood and tissue tests that confirmed the parentage of both children did they swap the child.

Michael McHugh, the father, said after the court case: "For ten days, that baby was our whole life. Now my wife feels she is starting again from scratch learning to love the new child."

The error was noticed by medical staff when the babies' weights bore little relation to the birth weights recorded on their identity tags.

Baby mix-up, page 1



Identity crisis: the hospital where tags were lost



Shattered lives from left, Julie Godwin, Cuan Cronje, Tim Godwin and Elizabeth Over together in Britain

Police hunt killers of British women

By RAY KENNEDY IN JOHANNESBURG AND HARVEY ELLIOTT

POLICE investigating the murder of two British women in South Africa yesterday said they might be able to identify the killers soon.

The mutilated bodies of Elizabeth Over and Julie Godwin, both 30, were found on an isolated beach at Sordwans Bay in northern Natal near the Mozambique border on Tuesday. They had been assaulted and thrown into the sea after putting up a fierce struggle against their attackers. Police believe they might have been raped.

Officers found bloodstains and fingerprints in the pickup truck the women had used to drive to the beach to sunbathe on Monday. Post-mortem examinations to discover exactly how the women died will be carried out after they have been formally identified.

Julie Godwin's husband, Timothy, 32, was due to fly to

South Africa tomorrow to visit her with their daughter Sophie-Elizabeth, 18 months. Mr Godwin recalled the moment last week at Heathrow Airport when he last saw his wife. "She cried as she walked away from me. She always got upset when we were apart."

Mr Godwin, who ran a family computer business with his wife, said his immediate task was to try to minimise the effects on Sophie-Elizabeth and explain to her that her mother would not be returning. "Sophie doesn't know what is going on. She is too young."

Speaking at Long Buckby, Northamptonshire, where the family was in rented accommodation while a home in nearby Spratton was being renovated, Mr Godwin said: "I suppose the lesson one must learn from this is that, if you go to South Africa,

you don't go out of the main cities." He said his wife and "Lizzie" had planned their holiday together very carefully. They had booked into a nature reserve near Sordwans in the Makatini Flats region. "But they were in a tourist area. They weren't just going out into the bush on their own."

Miss Over's mother Diana, of St Albans, Hertfordshire, said yesterday: "She travelled all over the world to the most dangerous parts but she never thought about it. We worried all the time but Elizabeth was an intrepid explorer who loved adventure. She and Julie were old friends and assumed they would be safe travelling together. They were obviously wrong."

Miss Over went to South Africa in February to be with her fiancé, Cuan Cronje, in Durban where she worked as

an advertising executive. Last night, Mr Cronje was due to identify her body.

Miss Over and Mrs Godwin first met 11 years ago at teacher training college and became firm friends.

A Foreign Office spokesman said that there were no plans yet to bring the bodies back to Britain for burial. "We are standing by to help the relatives in any way we can but it will now essentially be for them to decide what is done with the bodies when they are released."

The murders will be seen as a blow to tourism in South Africa, where the industry had been experiencing a boom since moves towards political reforms began three years ago. Although crime figures are soaring to alarming levels throughout South Africa the trouble had not, until this week, affected foreign visitors.

Doctors convicted of killing prisoner

By PETER VICTOR

TWO police doctors who killed a remand prisoner by prescribing excess doses of five drugs were convicted of manslaughter yesterday.

One of the defendants, Dr Dharendra Saha, 54, was not in court for the verdict, having collapsed in the dock on Tuesday with a suspected heart attack. He was in hospital yesterday.

Mr Justice Curtis adjourned sentence on both men. He granted bail to Churam Salim, 54, but warned him that he faced a jail sentence. He said he would need a detailed medical report on Saha.

The jury, which spent a night at a hotel and was out for nine and a half hours, convicted both on majority verdicts of 10-2. The doctors were GPs in Grimsby, working part time as police surgeons. Salim, of Waltham, near Grimsby, and Saha, of Grimsby, had pleaded not guilty to manslaughter.

Peter Birt QC, for the prosecution, said that the remand prisoner, Graham Rawlinson, a former heroin addict, was transferred to Grimsby police station from Strangeways prison, Manchester, in May 1990, after riots at the jail. He was prescribed massive amounts of drugs by the two doctors, including the heroin substitute methadone.

Prisoners moved from Strangeways were given tranquillisers to quieten them after the trauma of the riots. Mr Rawlinson was given five times the maximum safe dose of some drugs.

Mr Rawlinson, 23, of Levenshulme, Manchester, changed from a fit, alert and cheerful young man into "a zombie-like figure", Mr Birt said. He was seen staggering about the police station in a half-dazed condition and with his eyes glazed.

Within ten days of his arrival at Grimsby he went into a coma and was taken to hospital. He was discharged and sent back to the police cells where he again went into a coma and died.

Mr Birt said that the death of Mr Rawlinson — from waterlogging of the lungs brought on by the drugs — was unlawful killing by reckless or gross negligence.

Family of four dies on Jersey

By BILL FROST

POLICE hunting for the husband of a woman murdered with her children on Jersey disclosed last night that his body had been found.

Marla Gomes, 39, had been found stabbed to death in a flat on the Elysee estate in the island's capital following a 999 call to police. The bodies of her children Simon, 12, and Christopher, eight, were discovered later in a Volvo car.

Police had been anxious to trace João Gomes, 40, the woman's estranged husband. Last night they said that the body of the unemployed hotel porter had been found during the afternoon less than a quarter of a mile from his wife and children.

For some hours after the 999 call the whereabouts of Simon, who attended nearby D'Hautree School, and Christopher, who went to Rouge Bouillon School, was not known. Their bodies were discovered at about 11pm.

Last June, Mr Gomes was summoned by his wife to appear in court for separation and maintenance proceedings. He is said to have left the family home earlier in the year. The couple had been married for 13 years. They moved to Jersey from Portugal 15 years ago.

Drugs may have led to student's death

By MATTHEW D'ANCONA

AN OXFORD student plunged to his death from a second storey window yesterday after allegedly taking a cocktail of tequila and hallucinogenic drugs.

Henry Skelton, 21, a second year fine art student at New College, died in the intensive care unit of the John Radcliffe Hospital after falling 25ft from the window of his girlfriend's room. Police were yesterday investigating allegations that Mr Skelton, a former choral scholar at Marlborough College, had taken an hallucinogenic drug and had crawled out of the window in the belief that he could fly.

Oxford CID said: "It appears drugs and drink played a part in his death although we do not yet know what sort."

The university and student union declined to comment on an incident which they described as a "college matter". Harvey McGregor, warden of New College, said that Mr Skelton's talents as a sculptor were highly regarded by his tutors at the Ruskin School of Fine Art. "It would appear that he has fallen from the top window. We are not at this stage aware of how he fell and the police are obviously investigating the matter."

The latest Oxford tragedy will reawaken uncomfortable memories of the death of

Olivia Channon six years ago. The 22-year-old government minister's daughter died after mixing heroin, amphetamines and champagne at a post-finals celebration in Christ Church.

□ A Cambridge student with a history of depressive illness who was found dead in his college room will be buried tomorrow. An inquest was told that Sam Bunterell, aged 20, reading philosophy at Queens' College, was electrocuted.

John Pulford, senior councillor at the university, said that this year, 624 students had sought advice. A recession had made a big difference because students were under more pressure to succeed, he said.

Leading article, page 17



BA pilot in near miss found dead

By HARVEY ELLIOTT
AIR CORRESPONDENT

A BRITISH Airways pilot convicted of negligence after his jumbo jet flew too close to a Heathrow hotel has been found dead in a fume-filled car.

Captain Glen Stewart, 54, had tried unsuccessfully to start a new flying career. He resigned from British Airways soon after the near miss in November 1989 and had been living in Wokingham, Berkshire, on a pension of £24,000 a year instead of the £70,000 he received as a senior captain. He was married with three children.

Isleworth Crown Court was told in May last year that his jet, with 255 passengers on board, narrowly missed buildings on the main A4 Bath Road alongside Heathrow as it came in to land. The prosecution was brought by the Civil Aviation Authority. He was found guilty of endangering his aircraft and passengers and fined £2,000. After the trial, he said: "I believe I have been made a scapegoat."

The body was found on Tuesday by a man walking his dog at St Andrews West Sands beach, Fifeshire, ten miles from where Mr Stewart was born. A hospice from the exhaust ran inside the car.

New Marlborough head to ban the Pill

By JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

THE man named today as the next Master of Marlborough College has set himself the task of keeping the Wiltshire public school out of the headlines.

Marlborough has been dogged by a series of highly publicised incidents involving sex and drugs. David Cope, the present Master, who has expelled 20 pupils in seven years, has complained that press reports have painted the school inaccurately as "a den of iniquity with rampaging adolescents out of control".

Edward Gould, the headmaster of Felsted School in Essex, will succeed Mr Cope next August. Mr Gould said yesterday that he would make a few immediate changes, but would not authorise girls to take contraceptive pills.

Last month, Dr Barney Rosedale, the school's medical officer, was censured for

prescribing contraceptive pills to a 15-year-old pupil in another girl's name. Mr Cope has admitted that several Marlborough girls, including a small number under the age of 16, are still taking the Pill.

Mr Gould has nine years' experience of running a partly co-educational school. Felsted introduced girls in the sixth form shortly after Marlborough, but without the attendant publicity.

"I believe in the evolution of schools, rather than revolution, so I will not be going with a fixed set of ideas of things I want implemented, regardless of anyone else's views," Mr Gould said. "I hope to help Marlborough maintain progress academically and socially, so that it can emerge from a difficult period."

Mr Cope introduced to a school with a liberal tradition a firm disciplinary code,

including mandatory urine testing for suspected drug-takers. Mr Gould will rule on that policy after meeting the staff. "My view of liberalism is that you give sufficient space for individual strengths to develop. If it means freedom without responsibility, I will not accept it."

Mr Gould, 49, is a county rugby player and international oarsman. He is also a prominent and popular figure in the Headmasters' Conference. He chaired the Independent Schools' curriculum committee during the introduction of the national curriculum.

Marlborough is the second leading public school this week to name a new head. Yesterday, Charterhouse School announced that Peter Hobson, the headmaster of Giggleswick School in North Yorkshire, would succeed Peter Attenborough next September.

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SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY.

Complaints against banks soar for second year running

By LINDSAY COOK, MONEY EDITOR

THE number of complaints about banks increased by 60 per cent to more than 10,000 in the year to the end of September, Laurence Shurman, the banking ombudsman, reported yesterday. This follows a similar increase last year.

Charges and interest rates top the list of complaints at 1,939. This is almost double last year's tally of 1,004. While the ombudsman cannot make judgments on whether the interest rates and charges

being levied are exorbitant, he can order compensation when the calculations are wrong or there is some other maladministration.

Mr Shurman said: "It is disquieting if a bank miscalculates something. One tends to rely on a bank getting it right. In one case I awarded interest and then found the bank had miscalculated and had to award some more."

Another customer successfully challenged a bank's change from an overdraft rate

fixed at 2.5 per cent above base rate to a managed rate, and was refunded the difference over several years. The bank had been unable to prove that the customer had received a letter detailing the change, which was too important for the bank to vary it unilaterally, Mr Shurman said.

He was also critical of the insensitivity of computer-generated letters. While there was little the ombudsman could do if a customer was charged

according to a bank's tariff when overdrawn for a short time, he said it sometimes seemed insensitive to levy charges out of proportion with the overdraft.

Customers were not entitled to charge as much for their letters during disputes as banks levied for their correspondence, said Mr Shurman. Customers who might be able to charge £25 an hour or more for their work were not employed in that capacity when they wrote to banks. Their time was worth £5-£10 an hour, he said, although if an employee lost money by taking time off work for bank meetings this would be met.

The ombudsman said that the banking code introduced in March should reduce complaints. The limit of loss through cash cards for £50 enshrined in the code should operate unless there was proof that the customer had been grossly negligent.

Of the 172 complaints investigated, cash-dispenser disputes accounted for more than a third. Compensation was paid in 36 per cent of cases.

Why managers opt to coin it in

By LIN JENKINS

THE pensioner who was asked to pay £3 to change a £10 note at Lloyds Bank would have found similar charges at some other banks.

None would charge their personal customers but some business clients changing money regularly would be subject to an agreed tariff.

The fee demanded and then waived at the Lloyds branch in Debden, Essex, was the flat fee

applied to non-customers changing notes into coins or coins into notes. It is levied at the discretion of the branch manager, usually for small transactions only at the busiest times of day. "We are seen as a public utility, but things have changed," Geraldine Davis, a spokesman, said.

Midland Bank imposes a charge of £2 per £100 with a minimum fee of £2 to non-customers. Individual managers can decide whether to

impose the charge if the sums involved are small. National Westminster instructs branch managers to charge what they feel is appropriate if they believe that offering the service would affect that offered to account customers. The Royal Bank of Scotland operates the same guideline while Barclays allows its managers the option of refusing to change money.

Abbey National said it would not charge but might refuse the transaction.



Yuletide present and past: a Christmas tree in the form of a metal sculpture from the Coca-Cola Festival of Trees, at Sotheby's until December 8, and the traditional type, as popular today as it was in Victorian times

Practise your motorway driving. Stare intently at this page.

Champers on ice as we round the Horn

The leading yachts in the British Steel round the world race have now passed Cape Horn. Vivien Cherry, the skipper of Coopers & Lybrand, reports



It was the darkest part of a very short night, only four hours between dusk and daybreak. Our waiting and wanting had come to an end: we had passed Cape Horn.

On December 1, 1992, at 0530 GMT, the 14 people on board became members of the elite band of Cape Horners. What a brilliant feeling it was, with all the crew on deck taking photographs of each other holding a white wooden door on which the details were written.

It was possible to make out the silhouetted shape of the famous rock, but I doubt if any photographs will show it. Euphoria came easily with three bottles of champagne, and toasts were drunk to Chay Blyth and to each other as fellow Cape Horners. Homage was also paid to Neptune—a mug of champers.

It was Chay Blyth who made the whole thing possible, and who sold his idea of a challenge to these not-so-ordinary people. This was the adventure they had come for, the thrills and spills of sailing in the notorious Southern Ocean, and the conquest of the most frightening seaway in the world: Cape Horn. A more sobering thought was of all the past sailors who hadn't make it, and of the conditions they must have had to endure.

The conditions now are ideal, a northwesterly breeze giving us a calm sea and good boat speed of nine knots. The temperature has dropped to 8°C, and the boat is beginning to run with condensation.

Breakfast was a real blow-out celebration, with sa-

sages, fried potatoes, scrambled egg, cheese and mushrooms. We all look forward to the next excuse for a party: Christmas or half-way round the world, or maybe both.

Dawn was a brilliant display of natural phenomena, the orange red of sunrise complemented by a rainbow off the port bow. The distant icy mountains and glaciers of Isla Hosta and Tierra del Fuego were seen clearly reflecting all these colours, and looked far less than 50 miles away.

Before we reached the Horn we saw several icebergs. The magic of seeing one for the first time is unforgettable. There is something eerie, yet graceful and magnificent about these great lumps of ice. Regular sightings of whales, seals and new species of birds, especially albatrosses, brought cries of delight and half the crew running on deck.

Emotionally it has all been a real high, tinged only by slight disappointment at not having seen the Cape clearly and having no photographic reminders, but then some of the mystery remains for the next time. It feels colder today, more than just the temperature drop; perhaps also the thought of our first storm. The lead yacht, just 200 miles ahead with storm sails set, is battling against force 10 winds, and the bad weather is heading our way.

Meanwhile it is back to the old routine, four hours on, four off, change sails, trim sails, eat and sleep. There's still a long way to go, and a yacht ahead that we are chasing.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

SHIMANO: Safety First

Quality control checks have revealed that a quantity of brake lever clamps might contain a fault which could result in the brake lever on the handlebar becoming loose during operation. The problem affects a small number of clamps used with Altus brake levers bearing the code C10. This code, in pink, is clearly visible on the front side of the brake lever, where the brake lever is fastened to the handlebars. All owners of bicycles fitted with Shimano brake levers, who have purchased the bicycle since the end of September 1992, should check their brake levers for this code and also the handlebar clamp for the production code 'G'. If both of these markings are present or if you are in any doubt whatsoever you should contact the dealer from whom you purchased the cycle, for a free inspection and replacement if necessary. Clamps bearing any other marking, including 'Q-G', are not affected.

Fog, warning signs and hold ups all add up to a winter of discontent. If it wasn't for the train, we'd all go dotty. **INTERCITY**

For an InterCity guide to services call 081 200 0200.

Survey peeps into Britain's bedrooms

Sex still rules for the post-60s generation

BY JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH SERVICES CORRESPONDENT

MOST sexually active Britons have one partner at a time and there are fewer gay relationships than has been thought, according to the largest survey of sexual behaviour undertaken in this country.

Men are more sexually active than women, professionals more than workers and the young more than the old. But a key finding of the study, conducted by Dr Anne Johnson of the University College London Medical School and

colleagues, is that the post-1960s generation now aged 25 to 44 may have the most sexual intercourse.

The evidence shows that people over 45, who grew up in a less permissive age, have had fewer physical partners than those aged 25-44 whose sex lives began in the liberal 1960s or later. The post-Aids generation now aged 16-24, one in five of whom is a virgin, appears to be displaying more caution in its approach to sex.

The £1 million survey was funded by the Wellcome Trust after being banned by Margaret Thatcher when she was prime minister because she feared that questioning people about intimate matters would prove too intrusive. The results also suggest that fewer men seek sex with other men than has been thought. One in 17 men admits to having had sex with another man at some point, one in 70 says he has had a homosexual partner in the last five years.

The figure is much higher in London, where one in 20 men report having had a homosexual partner in the last five years, confirming the city's reputation as a centre for gays. But it is much lower than suggested by the 1948 Kinsey Report in America, which found that 30 per cent said they had had a homosexual experience.

Preliminary results from the study, based on interviews with 19,000 randomly selected men and women aged 16-59 and published in today's *Nature* magazine, show that people's sex lives vary widely with some remaining virgins throughout their lives (less than 2 per cent) and a few having hundreds of partners. One per cent of men have 16 or more partners in the past five years, and 1 per cent of women have 12 or more of the sex.

A minority choose one partner for life, except for women over 45, more than half of whom have had a lifelong monogamous relationship. Among men in the same age group, less than a third have stayed with a single partner and at all ages women are more loyal than men, twice as many saying they have had only one partner.

The study, which provides information for estimating the likely course of the HIV and Aids epidemic, suggests that serial monogamy (one faithful relationship after another) is the most common pattern for people's lives, with more than half of the over-25s reporting only one partner in the last five years. But the researchers said that they did not know how many people had more than one partner simultaneously.

A similar French survey, however, also published in *Nature*, suggests that this is common practice across the Channel among those aged 35-49, with one third of the men and half the women declaring at least two sexual partners at the same time. Single people, irrespective of their age or whether they had been married, were ten times more likely to have had two or more partners in the past year and people in social classes I and II twice as likely.

"People in the upper socio-economic groups have the highest incomes, are more mobile, have higher education and more opportunity to meet partners and marry later," said Kaye Wellings, one of the researchers.

In all age groups, men report more partners than women, implying that there are a few women who have a very large number of partners. "But it is possible that in a society with double standards, men find it socially easier to report more partners than women," she said.

The survey was conducted by 500 interviewers in the subjects' own homes between May 1990 and December 1991. Questions were phrased to minimise embarrassment and contained 185 consistency checks to ensure respondents were telling the truth.

Dealers find new life

BY SARAH JANE CHECKLAND

SOME of Britain's leading art and antiques dealers have been weathering the recession well and those specialising in oriental art have increased their turnover, a report published yesterday says.

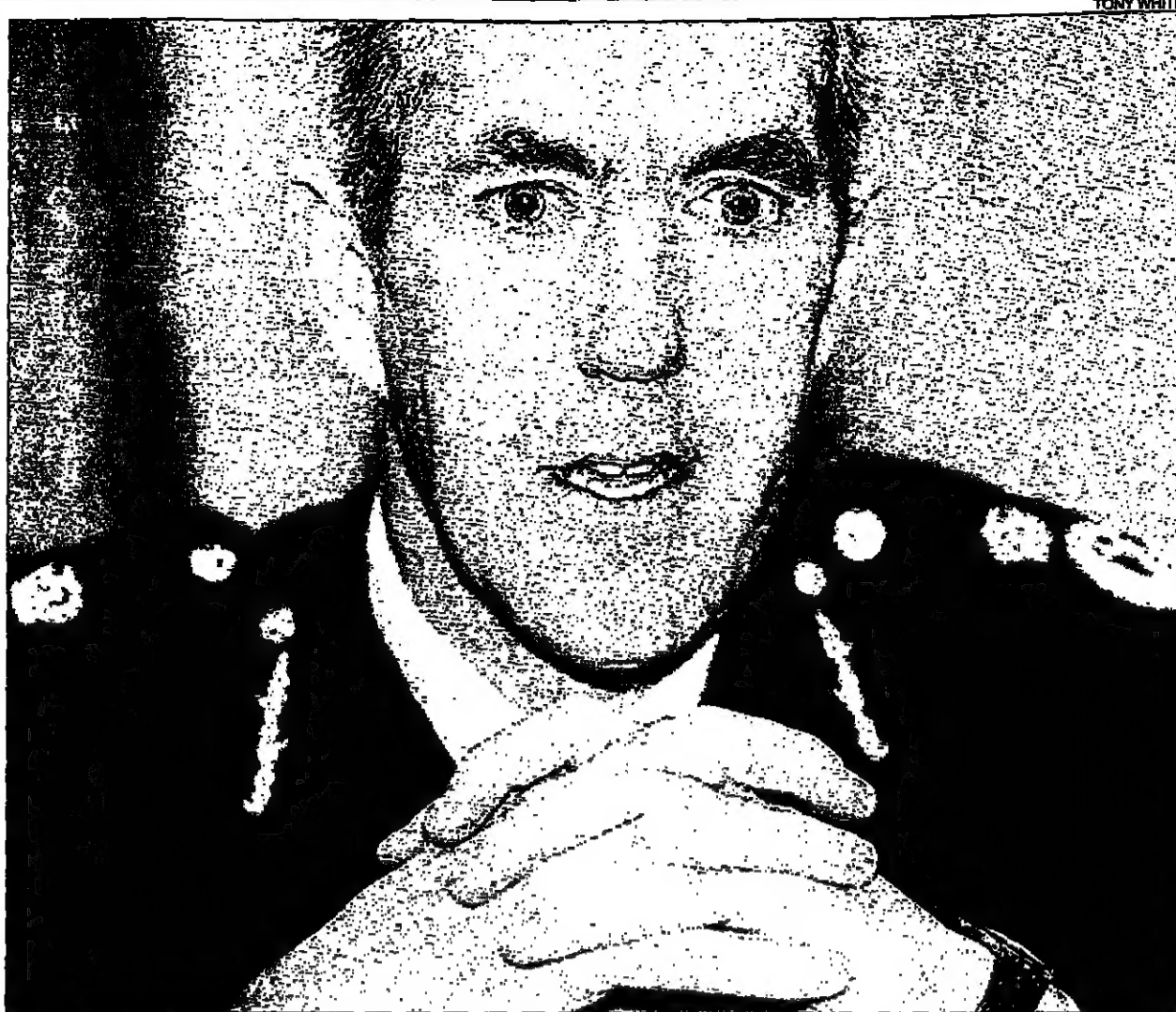
But statistics in the survey of members by the British Antique Dealers' Association suggested an estimated overall turnover for the entire membership of £430 million to £435 million, a downturn of 8 per cent in the year up to June 30, 1992. Six per cent of members improved their performance by 20 per cent or more, but two members were forced into liquidation, and seven retreated to their homes to continue trading.

The statistics come from data supplied by 223 of the 392 members who completed a questionnaire. Philip Constantini, of Eskenazi, the oriental dealers,

yesterday put his company's success down to the international appeal of his speciality. "The recession is international, but it is phased at different times in different countries. When America was down a year or two ago, Europe was buoyant. Now America is coming up again, and one can switch one's aims."

Elaine Dean, secretary of the association, said: "We will finish this year only three members fewer than last year, which is amazing given the climate."

London's status as the international art market capital did not noticeably decline, despite fears that business would drift abroad. About 46 per cent of sales in London, the South East and the South were to overseas buyers, a slight increase on 1990-1. But picture and print dealers suffered a 12 per cent downturn.



Back to basics: Paul Condon says the British bobby's Dixon of Dock Green image was rose-tinted

Yard's new chief urges police to abandon social engineering

BY RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

PAUL Condon, who steps into the toughest policing job in mainland Britain next year, said yesterday he expected his officers to return to basic policing and rid themselves of any ideas that they can change society.

Mr Condon takes over from Sir Peter Imbert as commissioner of the Metropolitan Police in February. An opera lover with an MA in law from Oxford, he also called for greater realism from the community about what the police could achieve in tackling crime in a more violent society.

Mr Condon, 45 and chief constable of Kent for the past three years, is the youngest man to be given the Met's top job. "What the police cannot be about is social engineering. I don't think there is a

commissioner or chief constable out there waiting to be appointed who is going to come up with a magic formula to manage crime out of society."

In his first big interview since his appointment, Mr Condon said the police had been guilty of pretending there was a managerial solution to crime. "There was a notion that somehow the police service could problem-solve crime out of the community. If there were enough clever ideas, if there was enough agency co-operation, if there were enough conferences and seminars to discuss crime, somehow there was a formula to be discovered."

While the Home Office is considering producing a white paper on the police

next year, Mr Condon said there had to be a more open and honest assessment of what the police could do and what the public could expect.

"Many of the things that have gone wrong in the past have not been because police officers were fundamentally bad. I think they have been working in a pressure cooker of a system which they have tried to make work. I'm not defending wrongdoing, but I can understand how pressure led to that wrongdoing."

Mr Condon is expected to press ahead with community policing and devolving responsibility to local stations. He also wants the police to have more flexibility to dismiss officers.

Effective, efficient policing, did not need shortcuts. "We've got to catch villains

and we're doing that successfully. But I'm not prepared to buy the 'ends justify the means' argument, where if that means a few villains having to be fitted up, that is a pain. That is a very dangerous path. It's laziness: it's 20-year-old police culture to suggest that we are the thin blue line protecting society and anything goes."

Mr Condon said the Met he joined 26 years ago had been poorly trained, fairly brutal and suffered from quite a lot of malpractice. The public had had a "rose-tinted image of Dixon of Dock Green" in which British police were believed to have the highest standards in the world. Paradoxically, as Britain's standards had improved, the service's reputation had declined.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Saudi royal struggles to raise bail

A member of the Saudi royal family accused of possessing heroin, cocaine, Ecstasy and cannabis in his London hotel room on July 9, was granted £50,000 bail at Horseferry Road Court yesterday, but said he did not have anyone to stand surety for him.

Prince Khalid Faisal Saud, 41, a relative of King Fahd, was arrested on Tuesday for allegedly failing to pay a £160,000 bill at The Lanesborough Hotel in the west end of London where he had been staying with his wife and daughter since July. He was then charged with the drug offences.

Gerard Boyd, for the defence, said there was "some embarrassment on the defendant's behalf" and said attempts were being made to contact the prince's family to obtain funds.

Venus honour

Two Cambridge academics have had a crater on the planet Venus named after them. Sidnie and Irene Manton, who were at Girton College in the 1920s were nominated for the honour by the university at the invitation of the American Geological Survey. During distinguished academic careers, both became fellows of the Royal Society, the only instance of sisters achieving such a distinction.

US grant

Cambridge University yesterday announced its largest ever social science grant: \$1.9 million from an American trust to support the university's global security programme. It is the first time that the Pew Charitable Trusts, based in Philadelphia, have sponsored work at a British university.

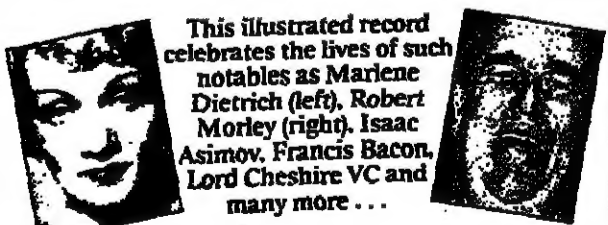
Sentence cut

Debbie McNally, 17, who was jailed for 18 months for being "cheeky and defiant" in the witness box during an attempted murder trial last month, had her sentence halved by three appeal judges in Edinburgh. Lord Penrose in the High Court at Aldrie had told Miss McNally, of Hamilton, Strathclyde, she had lied and deliberately flouted the court's authority.

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Merseyside's warship yard closes after 165 years

By PATRICIA TEHAN
AND RONALD FAUX

THE Cammell Laird shipyard, which built the Ark Royal aircraft carrier and the Prince of Wales battleship, is to close in July with the loss of more than 900 jobs.

The battle to keep open the shipyard in Birkenhead, Merseyside, ended with an announcement yesterday from VSEL, the owner, that in spite of the efforts of management, the workforce and local MPs, a buyer had not been found. The jobs will go with the completion of work on AOR Fort Victoria, a replenishment ship, and HMS Unicorn, the last conventional submarine. The yard began building warships in 1828, when a 60-ton iron lighter was ordered. Two years ago, when VSEL announced that a buyer was being sought, the yard employed 2,000.

Noel Davies, chief executive of VSEL, said the closure was a result of government policies that prevented Cammell Laird having access to the European Commission's Shipbuilding Intervention Fund and reduced warship building. Other factors were the prolonged recession and delay in a decision on the Liverpool Bay to Point of Air gasfield project, which could have brought work to the yard.

VSEL also has a shipyard in Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, where 1,000 of the 8,000 jobs could also go. Mr Davies said the firm had held talks with several shipbuilders and ship-owners since 1990 in an effort to find a way to keep the yard working and to avoid further redundancies. There were no takers, however, and VSEL is

A development of houses, shops and business parks is proposed to take the place of the historic shipyard

now seeking planning permission for industrial, residential, retail, office and leisure development on the site. If it receives permission, it will sell the site or look for a partner to develop it.

The closure was much regretted. Mr Davies said: "We are fully aware of the impact it will have on Cammell Laird's employees and on the people of Birkenhead. To maximise future employment on the site, we believe that it is now our responsibility to take a longer-term view and to consider the best way in which the site can be developed to attract industrial investment."

The news was a painful though not unexpected blow to Merseyside, which already has high unemployment as a result of other big closures. There are fears now about the knock-on effect on local traders and suppliers.

The GMB union, which represents half the workers at the yard, described the closure as "the end of an era" in British shipbuilding. Peter Horan, GMB regional secretary, said: "Today's announcement is not just about the loss of 972 jobs but the loss of highly skilled people who are needed to help get Britain out of recession. What more could we have done when faced with a government that has never accepted that Britain, as a

maritime nation, must be prepared to support shipbuilding? We want to see government intervention to regenerate the yard, not as a tourist attraction but as a centre for manufacturing."

Jim McFall, national secretary of the union's technical and craft section, added: "Yards in eastern Germany are given a 36 per cent subsidy while our government has stood idly by and refused to plan property for the peace dividend. There is no economic, industrial or social logic to what they have done."

Cammell Laird has produced a long line of fighting ships including the 35,000-ton Prince of Wales, the battleship launched in 1941, and the Ark Royal launched in 1955. In 1939, the 34,000-ton liner Mauretania slipped into the Mersey from the yard. VSEL wanted to turn the yard over to merchant ship construction but because it was designated a warship yard, access to the European Community support scheme was refused.

The scheme was set up in 1985 to provide subsidies for western European merchant shipbuilders in competition with Far Eastern rivals. This year, subsidies are running at 9 per cent, but have been as high as 20 per cent of the cost of any ship built, provided no profit was made. Without this assistance, Cammell Laird was not able to compete for merchant-shipbuilding orders.

Frank Field, Labour MP for Birkenhead, is demanding an emergency Commons debate on the closure.

Anger at closure, page 1



Proud tradition: the Ark Royal under construction in the 1950s at the Birkenhead yard, which began building warships in 1828

EC partners tackle Shephard over Britain's jobs policy

By PHILIP BASSETT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

BRITAIN will today ask its European partners to support the government's strategy on unemployment, according to a confidential document seen by *The Times*. But other EC states are likely to criticise Britain for trying to recommend policies that have caused high unemployment.

Gillian Shephard, the employment secretary, will chair a meeting of the EC's social affairs council in Brussels. While contentious issues such as the 48-hour working week and the establishment of European-style works councils are not on the agenda, Britain is likely to face a dispute over the proposals it has tabled for

reducing unemployment across the Community.

UK officials believed the proposals would be reasonably well received, since an informal meeting of European employment ministers at Chepstow in October had raised few objections to them. But experts close to the Community's social action programme said yesterday that Belgian, French and Italian officials had made clear that their countries were likely to object to the programme being put forward for approval.

They claim it will be hard for other countries to stomach being given a recipe for dealing with unemployment by a country that has 2.57 million people out of work — almost one-fifth of total unemployment across the Community.

The British resolution for the council meeting emphasises the need to tackle the "serious and deteriorating" unemployment rate across the Community, which

it says is "a major waste of talent and resources". The British government has uncharacteristically acknowledged that unemployment is likely to run on for years.

The government not only says that unemployment is a "grave problem generally", but admits it is "a particularly serious matter for certain regions and areas of the Community, and for vulnerable groups in society".

In spite of the government's domestic difficulties over the path to economic and monetary union laid down in the Maastricht treaty, its paper on unemployment for today's meeting says that "greater convergence and economic and social cohesion", as well as "greater stability in currency markets" in the wake of Britain's withdrawal from the European exchange-rate mechanism are needed to increase the prospects for business growth, investment and employment.

The way it isn't

CRAIG



AFTER a piece I wrote two weeks ago about my father's quirky belief in the commonness of anyone who sits in a chair when they can easily sit on grass, I have received a polite enquiry from a reader. "Forgive me for asking," she writes, "but if your father is so alert to what is common, why on earth did he christen you Craig?"

I am still struggling to come up with the right reply. Perhaps, I thought, Craig is a variant on a name that is rather grander. Like Cedric or Claud. Alas, when I looked in a dictionary of names, I discovered that Craig is a variant on "Cliff", which I would have thought if anything is one rung down the social ladder.

Of course, when I was born, in 1957, Craigs were few and far between, possibly even rather select. Unlike many names that are now considered reasonably distinguished — Pamela (from Richardson's novel), Wendy (from Peter Pan) and Kim (from Kipling's novel) — it was not simply called from a hero in a popular book.

Nor was it, like Miss Nightingale's Florence or Miss Clinton's Chelsea, originally cribbed from a place-name. Like today's pooh-poohed girl's name of Kylie, which is an Aboriginal word meaning "curl" or "boomerang", Craig has a long and gritty history. Why, then, has it been decreed common? It all seems hopelessly unfair. If only President Sharon were alive I'm sure he'd agree with me.



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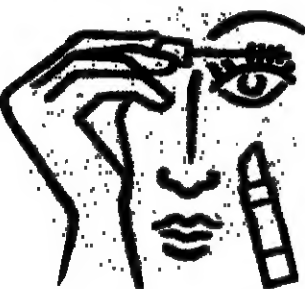
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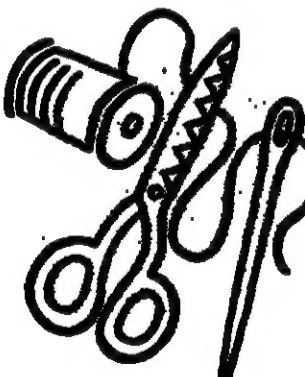
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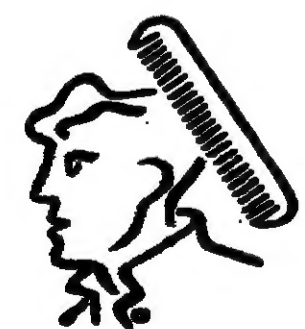
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Labour backs away from row over party links with unions

By PHILIP WEBSTER, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Labour leadership appeared last night to be backing away from an internal row over its investigation of the party's links with the trade unions.

The enquiry set up after John Smith's election as party leader in July now seems unlikely to come up with a firm set of recommendations on the future of the conference block vote, procedures for electing the leader and the selection of parliamentary candidates, and will instead present a set of options to the ruling national executive in January.

The NEC is then expected to put out the proposals for widespread consultation with the Labour movement.

The apparent change of procedure means that a widely leaked draft of the review's interim conclusions suggesting that the unions are to retain a key influence in the selection of candidates and the election of party leader has been downgraded to an option.

The draft will be presented to the NEC next month alongside more radical proposals suggesting a straight one member, one vote system for the selection of candidates and a new system for electing party leaders involving only party members and MPs, but excluding the unions. These are favoured by Mr Smith.

Senior Labour figures admitted last night that the

leadership might be opening itself up to criticism that it was ducking the issue. However, they felt that the procedure would be the most likely way of giving Mr Smith the outcome he wants from the review.

A consultation process within the unions and the local parties is deemed almost certain to reject the plan put forward in the draft report for union members to become "registered supporters" and to vote in the election of party leader and the selection of parliamentary candidates.

The plan has been proposed by a section of the GMB general union but is opposed as impracticable by other

unions, and even part of the GMB.

Mr Smith is expected to make his views clearly known as the process continues. At yesterday's meeting of the review Tony Clarke, the party chairman, is reported to have deplored the series of leaks that have emanated from it in recent days, and said that they had made the committee's task all the more difficult.

Party figures said the change of procedure reflected the strong opposition that had greeted the initial reports suggesting that the review would leave the unions with a strong influence in areas where it was expected after Mr Smith's election it would be sharply reduced.

Whitehall takes next step to efficiency

By MICHAEL DYNES
WHITEHALL
CORRESPONDENT

ANOTHER 29 government departments have been short-listed for executive agency status as part of the government's attempts to boost civil service efficiency. It was announced yesterday.

The short-listed departments, which include the prison service, the royal parks, and the paymaster general's office, will bring the number of semi-autonomous executive agencies to 105, which will account for 62 per cent of Britain's 594,000-strong army of civil servants. A "hit-list" of up to 50 more departments ripe for executive agency status has been drawn up, most of which are likely to be launched in their new capacity by the middle of 1995. This will bring the proportion of civil servants working in executive agencies to more than two-thirds.

Executive agencies are part of the Next Steps initiative launched by Baroness Thatcher in 1988 in an attempt to provide a more efficient and flexible civil service.

Publishing the third annual report on executive agency performance, William Waldegrave, the public service minister responsible for civil service reform, said that most agencies had managed to meet three out of four of their targets specifying financial efficiency, quality and workload objectives.

However, some agencies, notably the recruitment and assessment services agency, which was set up to help recruit civil service staff, performed badly. Its poor performance is being put down to the recession and the fall-off in civil service recruitment, which has forced restructuring.



Party gifts: guests arrive bearing presents for Rosemary Lamont's "at home" yesterday in aid of Tory party funds. In the Commons, the Labour MP Bryan Davies complained about the use of Number 11 Downing Street for fund-raising

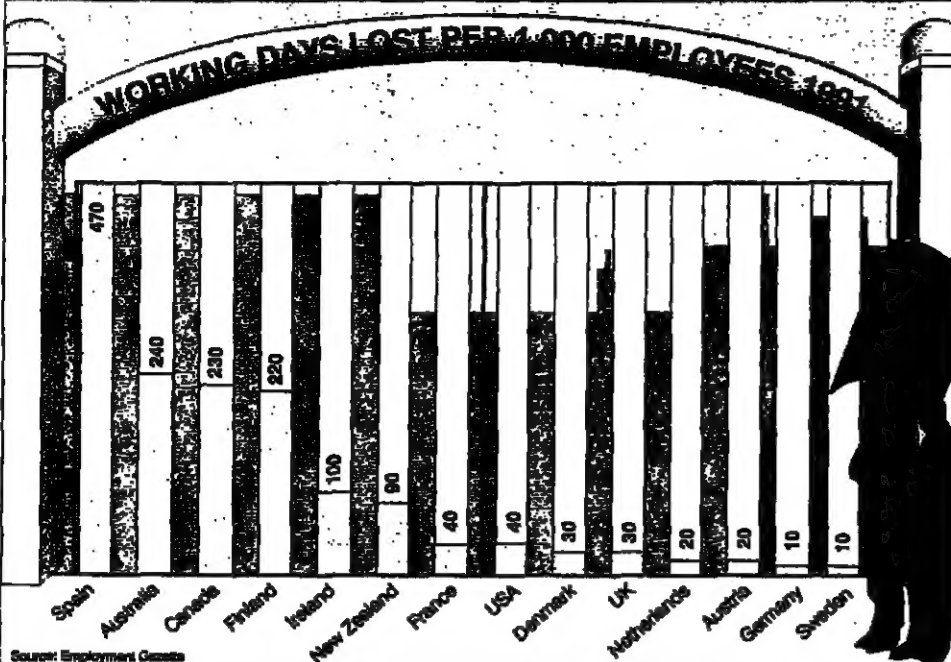
The 'British disease' still claims victims

By PHILIP BASSETT
INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

BRITAIN'S position in the international league table of strikes has not improved, in spite of the marked fall in strike activity, according to new figures released today by the government.

Government ministers and officials try to deflect attention from rising joblessness by pointing to the "success" of declining strike levels in Britain, and claim this marks a revolution in Britain's industrial relations, driven principally by changes in the law introduced by the Conservatives. However, new international comparisons released today by the employment department show that in terms of working days lost through strikes, Britain has maintained its roughly middle-ranking position compared to other competitor countries.

The employment department claims that this position



is an improvement on the UK's position in previous years, but in fact similar comparisons made by the department over the last decade and more have always placed Britain roughly in the middle of the league table.

Strikes have declined in all 20 countries examined over the past ten years, the department's new figures show, and Britain's position has largely stayed the same.

The department says that Britain lost through strikes an annual average of 130 days per 1,000 employees, or about one working hour a year. This is 70 per cent lower than the five years to 1987, and by looking at the period 1987-1991 the department claims that this is the fourth-sharpest fall, behind Germany (90 per cent), Norway and Denmark (both 80 per cent).

Looking at 1991, Britain's

middle-ranking rate is maintained at 30,000 working days lost per 1,000 employees. Top of the table is Spain, with 470,000 days lost.

The most strike-prone sector in Britain is now public administration, education and health, accounting for 60 per cent of working days lost in the 12 months to September. Pay is no longer the biggest cause of strikes, having been overtaken by redundancy issues.

Tunnel chief attacks BR sell-off plans

By JONATHAN PRINCE

SIR Alastair Morton, the chief executive of Eurotunnel, has added his voice to the criticism of the government's rail privatisation plans at the Commons transport select committee.

Sir Alastair said he was concerned that freight would

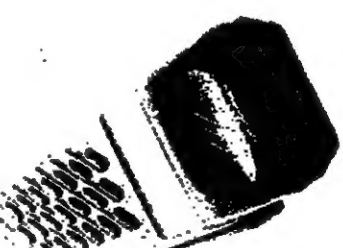
be driven off the railways because of the charging structure for rail infrastructure compared with the road network.

Secondly, "25 years of serious under-investment" with its associated burden of cost and inefficiency, had undermined the railways' ability to compete

with other forms of transport. He also raised the prospect of legal action against BR from Eurotunnel if investment obligations were not fulfilled.

Privatisation plans were "a recipe for confusion" over operators' access to different parts of the network. Sir Alastair said.

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Treaty debate in the Commons a necessary irrelevance in Community's future

The debate over the Maastricht treaty has now become a battle of symbols much more than of substance. MPs will spend the next few months baring each other and occasionally the public, on issues which will be determined not by the ratification of the treaty but by political events and market pressures.

One shrewd Tory MP yesterday summed up the feelings of many members when he described the bill as a largely irrelevant necessity. No one now expects the timetable for a single currency to be met, even if there is an inner core

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

Deutschmark zone. Much of the rest of the bill is damage limitation. But the MP believed that the treaty kept open options by giving Britain a say in negotiations over the future of the EC. That is regarded as naive and complacent by the fervent opponents, who see a threat to British sovereignty.

Stripped of the passion of the strongly committed, the treaty looks less significant than, say, the Single European Act, which extended

majority voting. In some respects, such as monetary union, developments are moving more in a pluralist than a federalist direction. The Euro-sceptics may, and probably will, lose the battle over the treaty but they may be winning the campaign. Maastricht has become a symbol of British attitudes towards the EC.

For John Major, ratification is a necessary step, justifiable not solely on its own merits, but to establish the seriousness of Britain's credentials to be at the heart of Europe. The government has no choice but to press ahead with the bill if its

other goals are to be achieved. Britain's standing was damaged by Mr Major's concession that the third reading would not be held until May. This reinforced the view of other EC countries that Britain is still half-hearted about the EC.

The Mediterranean countries have insisted upon ratification, as well as agreement on future financing, as prerequisites for talks over enlargement. This is because the treaty provides for the creation of a new cohesion fund for low-income countries, notably Spain. This is partly perverse since the first new entrants will be wealthier net

contributors to the budget like Sweden and Austria.

The squabbling over Maastricht — the attitude of Denmark and the related topics of subsidiarity and openness — has overshadowed the British presidency. There will be much trumpeting in Edinburgh about the completion of the single market. However, the arguments over Maastricht have obviously held up decisions on enlargement.

After Mr Major had completed half his tour around the European capitals, Downing Street was last night deliberating playing

down the chances of a full agreement in Edinburgh. Obvious differences remain over future financing and Denmark, though the new British presidency proposals should help to resolve obstacles over common European citizenship.

The other difficulties facing Europe — the exchange-rate mechanism, the Community-wide recession and the disintegration of Yugoslavia — would probably have happened regardless of the treaty.

The deteriorating situation in the former Yugoslavia is forcing the EC to consider a tougher line, though

any additional military action is likely to be limited. Mr Hurd wants EC foreign ministers to reassess the position and adopt a common approach at Edinburgh, to be presented to the new American administration and the recalled international conference.

The debates over Maastricht have made little difference to these problems. They are, none the less, a distraction and, like the EC referendum in 1975, they limit Mr Major's political room for manoeuvre until the bill is ratified.

PETER RIDDELL

Ministers ready to let Euro-rebels have their say over Maastricht

By ROBERT MORGAN AND JONATHAN PRYNN

GOVERNMENT ministers yesterday made clear it is private that they are prepared, for the time being, to let the Euro-sceptics speak at length in the debates on the Maastricht bill which yesterday started its second day's consideration. William Cash, Tory MP for Stafford and one of the leading opponents, spoke for two and a half hours with the committee stage started on Tuesday, and yesterday continued with the same speech.

Ministers will have to give more serious thought to making progress with the bill when MPs return to it after the Christmas break. No days have been earmarked for it between now and then.

Sir Russell Johnson, the Liberal Democrat spokesman on Europe, yesterday set out the difficulties facing Michael Morris, the deputy Speaker, who is chairing most of the sittings, and ministers, in curtailing the length of speeches from MPs. He said that MPs could be halted if they strayed from the subject. They could be stopped if they were tedious or repetitious. But, he said: "It is perfectly possible to speak about the Community for days without being repetitious."

There were ways to deal with the difficulty, but they also posed problems, he said. There could be a timetable motion, although the government might not get a majority for one. There could be a closure motion, but this gave

rise to problems because, so far, although the debate had gone on for some hours, very few people had spoken.

Mr Morris said that Mr Cash appeared to have covered all the points contained in the amendments before the House and "I imagine he will be winding up". He was not disappointed, and Mr Cash spoke for only about 20 minutes — the usual length of a backbencher's speech in a normal debate.

Some Euro-sceptics are criticising the bill and the government because there is no money resolution attached to it as it does not provide for the spending of money. Sir Teddy Taylor, a leading opponent and Tory MP for Southend East, again pressed for a money resolution to be tabled. But Mr Morris said this was a matter for the government.

The amendments being considered provide for parts of the Maastricht treaty to be written into the bill. Neither the government nor the official Opposition support them, but they have the backing of the Liberal Democrats.

Mr Cash continued his marathon contribution by asking what powers would be needed by the union to carry out the commitment in the treaty "to provide itself with the means necessary to attain its objectives and carry out its policies". Did this mean the union would require disciplinary powers, Mr Cash asked.

"Disciplinary action may not be just a question of fining," he said. "Who is to say it will not include in certain circumstances the use of force?"

Terry Dick, the Conservative member for Hayes and Harlington, provoked an indignant exchange when he questioned Mr Cash's Euro-sceptic credentials on the grounds that he had previously voted in the Commons in favour of European bills and his ambition to be elected a member of the European Parliament. Mr Cash said he genuinely believed in the European Community and wanted to see it work properly, and he described as a slur the suggestion that Euro MPs could not also be against the Maastricht treaty.

Mr Cash concluded his contribution with a description of the treaty as representing "political and economic defeatism ... and the denial of parliamentary accountability".

Peter Shore, a former Labour cabinet minister and one of the most senior Euro-sceptics on the Opposition benches, said it was important to focus on the "overall nature, character and purpose of the treaty" rather than get bogged down in technical detail. The paramount question for Britain was whether it was content to see its future as "a province of a united states of Europe" or as "an independent, democratic nation state."



Front-runners: William Cash, left, and Sir Teddy Taylor, lead off in the debate over the Maastricht treaty.

MPs investigate Navy's missing £1.2m

By SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

DEFENCE officials will be questioned further by MPs next week over how £1.2 million earmarked for an efficiency incentive scheme went on a party for naval workers, membership of health clubs and subsidies for social events. They have been called before the Commons public accounts committee after Sir John Bourn, the public spending auditor, discovered irregular payments in the 1990-1 defence appropriation accounts. At first he reported to MPs that the irregular payments

totalled £210,000 because of money spent on "novel and contentious items".

In a new briefing paper to committee MPs for next Wednesday's hearing, Sir John disclosed further irregularities. His auditors had revealed irregular payments totalling £1,218,000, or 13 per cent of the £9.4 million budget for the scheme. More than £1 million of the spending was irregular because it had not been authorised by the Treasury or fell outside the department's powers.

Sir John said that some £129,000, had been spent in support of celebrations of the Royal Naval Supply and Transport Service's 25th anniversary.

"Other expenditure had been incurred in support of 'out of hours' recreational and social facilities, such as club membership of health and leisure centres; subsidies for staff social events; the provision of sports facilities and equipment; and charitable donations."

A total of £682,000 was

spent on buying a coach and 56 minibuses.

"None of this irregular expenditure had been referred for approval, as required by the departmental guidelines. This constitutes a serious breach of basic financial controls," the Comptroller and Auditor General wrote.

The Treasury has decided to write off the money as a loss. The defence ministry is to take no disciplinary action and will not try to recover any of the money. The incentive scheme has been discontinued.

AROUND THE LOBBY

Security a headache

Britain's security services caused more trouble than they were worth in some areas, Lord Jenkins of Hillhead, the Liberal Democrat peer and former Labour home secretary, said in the Lords. He said ministers found they had to deal more with "intermediate quarrels" among members of the services than with any effective information they provided. His advice to any new minister was to never sign anything automatically and to be cautious about signing anything at all. Baroness Chalker of Wallasey, Foreign Office minister, said: "I am sure that for all Lord Jenkins's experiences there are others who have experiences contrary to his."

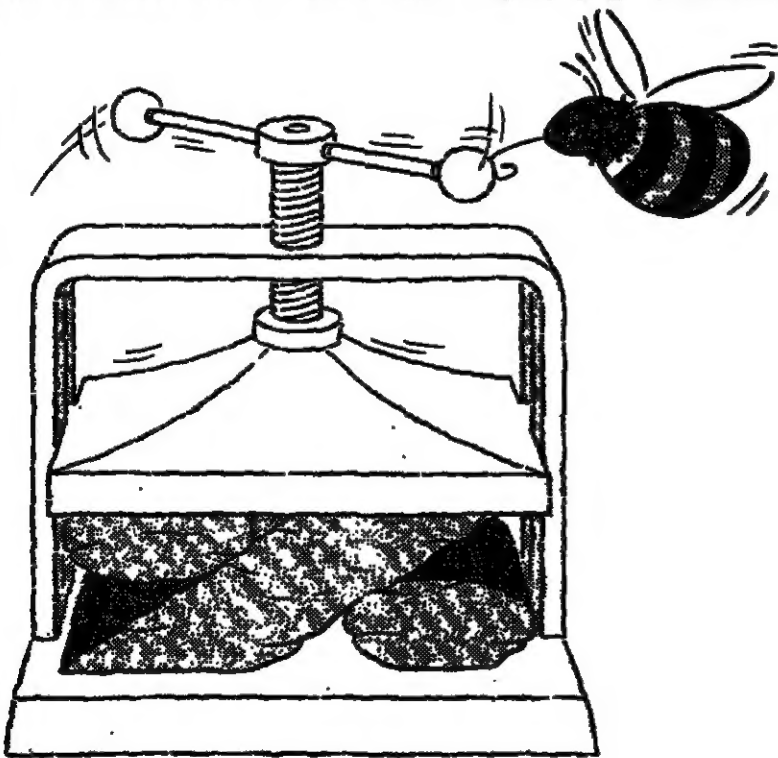
Homes cost

Mortgage interest tax relief will cost just over £5 billion in this financial year, Stephen Dorrell, Treasury financial secretary, said in a written reply.

In Parliament

Commons (2.30): Questions: agriculture, fisheries and food; prime minister. Judicial pensions and retirement bill, second reading. Lords (3): Sea fish (conservation) bill, third reading. Criminal justice bill, report.

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Kohl says EC unity is only way to combat extreme nationalism

Germany is taking in more refugees that the rest of Europe put together. Herr Kohl wants asylum laws to be unified across the EC

By ANATOL LIEVEN IN BONN AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

HELMUT Kohl, the German chancellor, yesterday gave a warning to other European Community countries that uncontrolled immigration could lead to a wave of racist violence across Europe, and said that they must develop a common policy on immigration.

Herr Kohl was addressing the Bundestag during the debate on ratification of the Maastricht treaty, which was passed by 543 votes to 17. The passionately pro-European speeches of the chancellor and other deputies made an explicit link between the threat of a return of extreme nationalism and the need to cement European unity. Many gave the impression of being moved much less by economic considerations.

Herr Kohl said that at the moment the flow of refugees and migrants from Eastern Europe is concentrated on Germany, but because of open borders this would soon be a problem for the whole of Europe. He made an indirect appeal to the opposition Social Democrats to agree to change Germany's liberal asylum law

to bring it into line with those of the rest of Europe.

Herr Kohl and other members of his government promised to do all in their power to stem racist violence within Germany. Klaus Kinkel, the foreign minister, said that "all democrats must stand together in order to end such thinking once and for all". For the Social Democrats, Heidemarie Wierzbick-Zeul said that against the background of growing nationalism, European integration "is also an anchor for the political stability of Germany".

Herr Kohl called for negotiations for an entry of European Free Trade Association countries into the EC to begin early next year and said Germany was determined that East European countries should be given hope of joining. He and other speakers implicitly criticised Britain and Denmark for their approach to Maastricht. Herr Kinkel said that any changes to Maastricht must not require a change in the treaty. "The message from Edinburgh must be 'European unity goes

forward, and Britain and Denmark are part of the process".

Oskar Lafontaine, the deputy chairman and former leader of the Social Democrats, yesterday described the plan for currency union by 1999 as an unachievable mistake which would automatically lead to a two-speed Europe. He said that the lack of powers for the European parliament meant that the EC is not yet democratic.

Reflecting such concerns, the Bundestag also passed an amendment to the constitution giving both houses of the German parliament a right of supervision over European legislation.

□ **Suicide attempt:** One of the two right-wing activists who have confessed to the firebomb killings in Mölln attempted suicide early yesterday. German police said. Lars Christiansen, 19, slashed his wrists. Neighbours described the apprentice supermarket worker as a lonely and unfriendly youth who fell under the influence of the local neo-Nazi group a few months ago.

V2 industrialist resigns over imperial flag

FROM REUTERS
IN BONN

THE man who launched the embarrassing fiftieth anniversary celebration of Adolf Hitler's V2 "wonder weapon" has quit Germany's biggest aerospace company amid controversy after flying the country's old imperial war flag.

Karl Dersch, international marketing director for Deutsche Aerospace (DASA), handed in his resignation after a meeting with DASA's chairman, Jürgen Schrempf on Tuesday. But the controversy over his habit of flying the imperial flag — now the favourite banner of neo-Nazis — continued yesterday amid fear that the incident would further damage Germany's crumbling reputation abroad.

The liberal *Frankfurter Rundschau* newspaper said that flying the flag with the Iron Cross and the eagle symbol of the old German Reich would only encourage the right-wing extremists who wanted to firebomb their way to a Fourth Reich. "What must they think when they see 'their' imperial war flag flying in the garden of a big industrialist?" it asked.

The newspaper, which also ran outraged comments from opposition Social Democrats, said that Herr Dersch's election to the Federation of German Industry's board on Monday neutralised the anti-racism campaigns many firms have launched. DASA's owner, Daimler-Benz AG, was expected to accept his resignation, a spokesman said.



Out of step: Karl Dersch failed to notice how the flag was being misused by neo-Nazis

pected to accept his resignation, a spokesman said. Herr Schrempf said: "I respect the decision of my colleague, of whose fundamental democratic belief I am completely convinced." The news magazine *Der*

Spiegel disclosed at the weekend that Herr Dersch had flown the former flag of the German Imperial Navy for years in the front garden of his home in a Munich suburb. Neo-Nazis regularly brandish the first world war

flag at rallies where they chant "Foreigners Out!" Herr Dersch, 57, is president of the Federal Association of the Air and Space Industry. Friends described him as an avid collector of obscure paraphernalia, politically conservative but not an extremist.

"Unfortunately I failed to notice that the flag had been misused for some time by radical right-wing groups. Perhaps I could have noticed this," Herr Dersch said in a statement. He called the flag a "favourite souvenir of sailors and members of the navy", saying he had received it 15 years ago as a gift, hung it on the mast and forgot about it. "I certainly must ask myself the question why I simply forgot about the flag despite political developments in Germany," he added.

This was not the first time that Herr Dersch had come under fire. As president of the board of German industry, he initiated the fiftieth anniversary celebration last October of the first launch of a prototype of Hitler's V2 rocket that battered Britain during the second world war. The event was to be held at the old Peenemünde launch pad on the second anniversary of German unification, but was cancelled after a storm of international protest.

The opposition Social Democrats said that Herr Dersch should not be allowed to hold any representative posts in industry. "A man who uses the imper-

il war flag, the fighting symbol of radical right-wing neo-Nazis and skinheads, strikes common cause with these groups," said Wolfgang Roth, the SPD economics spokesman, said that Herr Dersch had damaged the image of Daimler-Benz. "Such behaviour is unbearable and inexcusable. It must wake recollections of the support for Adolf Hitler in parts of big business," Herr Roth said.

□ **Berlin:** While his famous uncle endeared himself to this town by declaring himself a Berliner, Joseph Kennedy junior yesterday delivered a message for a far different era: "I am a bigger."

The Massachusetts Democratic representative returned to the scene of President Kennedy's greatest Cold war speech and criticised Germany's reaction to rising neo-Nazi terror.

His three-day visit was the first by a US congressman for the express purpose of denouncing the alarming trend although one expatriate American reminded Mr Kennedy about hate crimes in his native Boston.

"The reason I am here is because I and millions of other Americans have been watching on our television screen... the ugly scope of hatred that has invaded our living rooms," Mr Kennedy, the son of the late senator, Robert Kennedy, told students at the John F. Kennedy High School. (AP)

Paris seeks Bonn backing for direct Gatt talks with US

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN PARIS
AND TOM WALKER IN BRUSSELS

FRANCE wants to negotiate directly with Washington to defuse the dispute over farm products and President Mitterrand is expected to seek German support for the action in talks today with Helmut Kohl, the chancellor, according to French officials.

Jean-Pierre Soisson, the agriculture minister and leading player in the French offensive against the US-EC agreement on agriculture, sketched his plan yesterday as Pierre Bérégovoy, the prime minister, restated that France would do everything in its power to block the "pseudo-agreement".

However, Jacques Attali, the head of the Bank for European Reconstruction and Development and a former senior adviser to M. Mitterrand, became the most prominent public figure to question the wisdom of this hard line yesterday. France, he said, was being "drawn into a trap" over agriculture. It should put aside the farm dispute and work for an overall General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade deal as this could prove far more beneficial.

The fate of France's resistance to the agriculture accord, and the impact of the quarrel on the shaky future of the Maastricht treaty on European union, will be shaped by how much Herr Kohl agrees to help his French ally in their talks today and tomorrow before next week's Edinburgh summit. M. Mitterrand and Herr Kohl will also look for ways of using the EC meeting to try to pump some life back into the pursuit of integration after the monetary and political upheavals in the months of the British presidency.

M. Soisson said direct talks with the Americans could focus on oil-seed production, one of the two issues which triggered France's rejection of the Washington agreement. Germany stands to lose more than France in the undertaking to cut oil-seed production and would benefit from a re-

negotiation, he said. The attempt to rope in German support for re-opening the farm negotiation is viewed as unrealistic by many EC officials but M. Soisson, speaking to American and British journalists, was adamant that many of France's partners had now come round to his view, at least in private. The Belgians he said, had told France to "say the word".

Henning Christophersen, the EC's finance commissioner, meanwhile criticised "irrational" speculation against the Irish punt, French franc and Danish krone that is again wreaking havoc in the exchange-rate mechanism of the European Monetary System.

The Danish commissioner, in the limelight over the past weeks because of his calls for an EC growth initiative, refused to endorse the view of Helmut Schlesinger, the Bundesbank president, that the demands the ERM makes on central banks to intervene in the defence of weaker currencies are an incentive to speculators. "The fundamental conditions for stability and calm within the system exist", he said, adding that France, Denmark and Ireland all have balance of payments surpluses and low inflation.

Leading article, page 17



Soisson: oil-seed talks should be reopened

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Russian deputies rally conservative opposition to the future of Yeltsin's economic reforms

Hardliners barrack Gaidar's attempt to justify his policies

FROM ANNE McELVOY IN MOSCOW

YEGOR Gaidar, Russia's acting prime minister, fought yesterday for his own political future and that of the government's beleaguered reform programme, telling the Congress of People's Deputies that any change to the current radical course would pluck Russia into "the swamp of underdevelopment".

But Aleksandr Rutskoi, the conservative vice-president, mounted a strong challenge to the reform government, calling for an alternative programme restoring greater state control to the economy. Mr Rutskoi, criticising Mr Gaidar for accepting the International Monetary Fund's shock-therapy, said he wanted a broad coalition government to lead the country out of crisis. He said that it was time for the government to face the need for compromise with the conservatives.

"It is time to abandon the slogan, 'Either us or back to communism,' he said. "We cannot abandon regulation and management. Let us do the main thing and arrive at national conciliation on the question of reform tactics."

Mr Rutskof's attack on the principles of reform drives Congress closer to deadlock with the government. Conservative deputies are vowing to push through the "law on government" that would subject the cabinet to parliamentary control against the will of President Yeltsin.

The president, in his opening speech to Congress on Tuesday, made postponement of the law one of the key elements in the compromise package under which he offered to give up his special powers in return for a clearer allocation of powers between go vurnment and parliament.

of Congress, an emotional Mr Gaidar attacked hardliners pressing to restore state control of the economy, saying that they risked dragging Russia into hyper-inflation and conditions "reminiscent of the Third World or Latin America". He said: "We are not in a wide-open space where we can calmly discuss the best path to take to a happy future. Our room for manoeuvre is strictly limited."

Deputies jeered as Mr Gaidar defended his government's record, at times causing the young reformer to falter and perspire in evident distress as he strove to overcome the hoots of disapproval. The architect of an IMF-backed reform strategy, he is the prime target of conservatives. They want to see him replaced this week.

In response to criticism by Russian Khabslatov, the hardline parliamentary chairman who had called for the path of radical reform to be replaced by a social-democratic model allowing the state greater powers of intervention, Mr Gaidar said that it would be years before Russia had the luxury of choice between competing Western models. "At this moment, the choice is more crucial. It is between pursuing reforms or giving in to criminal delays which are pulling our country down."

With Congress finely balanced, the opposition has calculated that it can afford to push the government towards broader concessions than those Mr Yeltsin offered on the first day. Hardline factions now seem keen to press for retention of the conservative parliament's influence over the executive as a quid pro quo for confirming Mr Gaidar in office. The Yeltsin camp is unlikely to accept these terms.

In a reformist counter-attack, Father Gleb Yakunin, a prominent Yeltsin supporter, threatened a walk-out by the government's supporters if the resolution subjecting the government to heavy parliamentary control was passed. This would paralyse Congress.

Mr Gaidar admitted that Russia was in economic crisis and that the government had failed to understand the severity of the payments crisis or to tackle inflation early enough. But he countered Mr Khasbulatov's claim that the government's economic failure had been "a complete disaster" by saying that his government had preserved social stability and warded off the threat of hunger in the transition from communism to capitalism.

His speech was less conciliatory towards the main opposition, Civic Union, which represents the interests of the military-industrial lobby, causing some government oppo-

well be a dual tactic adopted by them to pull moderate conservatives onto their side while keeping the commitment to free-market economics alive.

In one significant nod to the industrial lobby, Mr Gaidar promised that there would be no withdrawal from the international arms market, a valu-

able source of both employment and revenue. But he assuaged Western fears that Russia would seek to balance its books by feeding the world's conflicts with weapons, saying that the country would seek only "reliable partners".

deputies vote on whether he should be confirmed as prime minister. Mr Yeltsin is anxious to keep him, but the hostility that greeted the speech must have caused the government camp to start considering alternatives. Congress voted him down.

the choice of prime minister since it hopes to replace him with a candidate of its choosing: possibly Mr Rutskoi, the entrenched conservative vice president. Mr Gaidar could then remain as head of economic policy, but a battle for power and direction would be

himself as prime minister, a post he held before Mr Gaidar's appointment as acting premier and which would give the opposition the sacrifice it demands without lumbering him with hardline influence too close to the heart of government.



Man who broke the pound gives millions in aid

BY MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

George Soros, the man who broke the pound on Black Wednesday, is to give up to \$250 million (£165 million) from his speculation profits to set up a foundation to save Russian science and to help the victims of the war in former Yugoslavia.

The money will be used to employ thousands of scientists who have been thrown out of work by the economic turmoil in Russia. Mr Soros also plans to send huge sums to set up safe havens in Bosnia and to assist Macedonia, a country where he says there is an urgent need for external aid. The sums he is proposing far exceed the emergency aid budgets of most Western countries.

western countries.

Mr Soros, a New York financier of Hungarian origin, made around a billion dollars in speculating against the pound on the day that sterling was forced out of the European exchange-rate mechanism. In *The Man who Broke the Pound*, a Thames Television documentary on his coup, to be shown tonight, it is estimated that he will be redistributing to Eastern Europe the equivalent of £12 for every man, woman and child in Britain. Likened to modern Robin Hood, his philanthropy is on a scale unmatched by anyone in modern times.

modern times.

Mr Soros told *The Times* yesterday that he saw an urgent humanitarian need in Bosnia and had conceived the idea of safe havens for war victims after talking to Tadeusz Mazowiecki, the United Nations special envoy looking into war atrocities in Bosnia. "It is a tricky problem. I do not want to become an accomplice in ethnic cleansing," he said. But the concept of safe havens "would prevent what is a horrendous human tragedy".

He will meet Sadako Ogata, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, today to discuss how his money should be spent. A "significant sum" — \$50 million — will be channelled through humanitar-



an organisations already operating in Bosnia. His foundation has already run a summer camp for 200 orphans, which he said was "a wonderful thing".

Mr Soros also criticised the international isolation of Macedonia, and is running a separate fund to help the country, although he denounced its current leadership. He has just visited Macedonia, Albania and Slovenia as part of a tour to Eastern Europe, to which he has given over \$91 million in the past decade.

He told Thames Television that he had played the game by the rules in his speculation against the pound. "I have absolutely no sense of having done anything immoral,"

HIS fund for Russian science will be set up in co-operation with the former Soviet Academy of sciences. The details were now being worked out and will be announced next week. He said yesterday that a pilot project in Novosibirsk, costing around \$3 million, had proved a great success. There was much of "great human value" in Russian science, and he wanted to save it from disintegrating under economic pressures.

Mr Soros admitted that he was worried by the possible emigration of nuclear scientists to help unscrupulous governments abroad. This was partly why he wanted to help keep secrets in Russia.

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West's militant mood clouds purpose of Bosnian role

THE war drums of the West are beginning to beat again: the talk in America and, more tentatively, in Europe is of a "Balkan Storm" operation to settle the dispute in former Yugoslavia.

The mood has swung for and against military intervention in Bosnia-Herzegovina throughout the summer and the autumn. Will a military operation result in a Balkan bloodbath? Or will the bloodbath happen if the West does not go in? The present military mood is rooted in a combination of factors. America has signalled — by allocating soldiers for United Nations operations in Somalia — that it is not retreating into a shell during the presidential transition. The Somalia mission, admittedly far simpler than the requirements of Bosnia, seems to have the incoming Clinton administration's support.

The conventional wisdom is that Serbia will soon turn its guns on the autonomous province of Kosovo and that the Balkan war will spread beyond the borders of former Yugoslavia. Military intervention in effect a limited, undeclared war against Serbia — could thus head off a devastating war in southern Europe, a repeat of the Balkan conflict 30 years ago.

The Albanians may come to the help of their cousins in Kosovo or Macedonia. Turkey would also find it difficult to stand on the sidelines if there were a massacre of ethnic Albanians. That would alarm Greece, already concerned about Macedonia's stability. Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece could all make territo-



Military intervention is being considered to contain the Bosnia conflict, but the sabre-rattling smacks of diplomatic bluff, Roger Boyes writes

rial claims on Macedonia. The proponents of intervention argue, however, that action could prevent such a disaster. Moreover, moves by Islamic states this week indicate that there would be a broad international consensus for a preventive war and that the oil states would be prepared to finance it.

Much of this tough talk is probably diplomatic bluff. The American administration wants to demonstrate — and not just to the Serbs — that it is still on the ball. But it is a long way from committing ground troops. Washington appears to be willing to enforce an air exclusion zone over Bosnia, but while that has military implications it does not amount to it is not a strategy. The sabre-rattling is at least partly designed to influence the outcome of the Serbian presidential elections on December 20. Milan Panic, the federal "Yugoslav" prime minister, is running against Slobodan Milosevic, the incumbent. Intervention before polling would certainly carry the election for Mr Milosevic. But the threat of intervention could help Mr Panic, who is perceived by moderate Serbs as a man who can talk convincingly to the West.

The most fundamental questions about intervention have still not been cleared up, nor have they been properly aired. Hence the differences between the Foreign Office, which is beginning to talk in quite stern tones, and the Ministry of Defence, which is reluctant to contemplate war at least until the American position is more clear.

The big unknown is the strength and determination of Serbia. This alone would dictate the size and duration of a military intervention. Yet Western intelligence assess-

ments are remarkably thin on the subject. Those opposed to intervention argue that more than 100,000 Austro-Hungarian soldiers earlier this century, and dozens of German divisions in the second world war, were pinned down by "brigands" and partisans in the Balkans. The Serbs have a reputation for being ferocious fighters and they have access to the huge stocks of the Yugoslav national army.

Senior Serb commanders have received Soviet-style training and maintain a so-



phisticated communications network. Any Western military operation — to say the least — would require a large land army as well as air support.

The "regular" units of Bosnian Serbs are estimated at 90,000 men, supplemented by 20,000 irregulars and some additional thousands of "weekend warriors" who cross into Bosnia for a few days plundering. German military intelligence believes that the Serbs have a few hundred tanks, 200 pieces of long-range artillery, 170,000 tonnes of stored munitions and countless mortars.

Yet the Serbs are not as powerful as these figures suggest. Their logistics are poor and they have difficulty concentrating their forces. There have been no really decisive battles in this war.

Serb tactics have been, rather, those of the Thirty Years war: they besiege cities, bombard civilians and defenders for months on end. Such warfare suits badly-trained men who need only fire at a sitting target.

The relative weakness of the Serbs became plain in the summer. Sarajevo was bombed most often at night because the heat of cannon fire quickly dehydrates soldiers. The Serbian command could not supply enough water to satisfy the soldiers during daytime firing, so they slept away most of the morning.

With the onset of winter, other Serbian weaknesses have become obvious. Although they have winter clothing, their barracks are short of fuel. Many soldiers drink heavily. Even against a much smaller army of 30,000 Croats, and a ramshackle ill-equipped Bosnian Muslim force of 70,000 policemen and volunteers, the Serbs have not been able to secure the corridor to Krajina.

There are now almost

16,000 UN troops, 2,400 of them British, in Bosnia. Their equipment is far superior to anything possessed by the Serbs. If the nature of their mission were redefined, from defending humanitarian aid deliveries to attacking Serb positions, the tide of war could quickly change.

But the risks would be high — of Western casualties, of atrocities and revenge killings on civilians — and there is little doubt that such a Western operation against Serbia would seriously strain relations between America and Russia, which is emotionally connected to Serbia, at the start of the Clinton presidency.

The West's political goal in Yugoslavia has still not been spelt out. Is it to restore the territorial integrity of Bosnia at any cost? If so, is the UN prepared to establish a protectorate, perhaps for many years, while political solutions are worked out? Or is the intention to give up on Bosnia and ensure that war does not

swallow up Kosovo and Macedonia? Discussion of these priorities is being drowned out by the sound of tom-toms in the saloons of the West.

Belgrade: More than 41 per cent of Serbs expect foreign military intervention in the former Yugoslavia within the next two years, according to a recent opinion poll (Tim Judah and Dossa Trevisan write).

Yugoslav military leaders are cautioning the West against intervention. "In the

event of an aggression, instead of Desert Storm they might be faced with a new Vietnam or still worse a Balkan Storm," General Bozidar Stjepanovic, head of the Yugoslav Air Force, said last week.

Apart from fuel, Bosnian Serbs are largely self-reliant. One military expert estimates that the Serbs around Sarajevo have enough shells to continue the bombardment of the city for the next five years.

Geneva talks, page 1



Dividing line: risks would be high if UN emphasis moved from convoy protection to attacking Serb positions

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Hurd studies ways to deploy fighting forces effectively

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE sudden offer of 30,000 American troops to force food supplies through to the starving Serbians has generated an unprecedented feeling of frustration and anguish in London over the failure of European policies in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, is looking once again at the options for military intervention in Bosnia. However hard he looks, he will not find any easy way of committing troops in an offensive role with any guarantee of long-term success.

The options — air strikes, limited ground action to seize key points such as airfields or a full-scale campaign — have not changed since the civil war began on April 6. They will be more difficult to implement, because the Serbs are emboldened by the West's inaction and will not readily back off.

The deployment of huge numbers of troops to push the Serbs back and stop the fighting has always been rejected in Whitehall. The logic behind that judgment remains the same, but there is clearly growing frustration about the way the Serbs are openly flaunting United Nations Security Council resolutions, such as the ban on military flying.

There is no question that if the West, either as a one-off coalition force or as a Nato unit, mounted a saturation offensive against the Serbs, the advanced weaponry, logistics, tactics, superior training and intelligence capability would ensure short-term victory, but at what cost?

The Serbs in Bosnia are not a professional army with effective command and control. They are largely an amalgam of individual militia ruled by warlords whose loyalty is to

themselves and to their own personal ambitions. Each wants to be president of his slice of territory.

General Ratko Mladic is their overall commander, but whenever he signs a ceasefire agreement with his Croatian and Muslim counterparts, the Serbian warlords demonstrate their independence by increasing the level of violence.

After spending three weeks in central and northern Bosnia, I am tempted to say that air strikes and limited action might have an effect on some of the Serbian positions. For example, Serbian guns in the mountains of Vlasica and Komar, overlooking the Travnik area, could be targeted, either by air strikes or by mortar fire.

The Serbian direct-fire anti-aircraft weapon that sits in the wooded hills on the eastern side of the main road to Tuzla,

threatening all passing vehicles, could also be destroyed. So, too, could the permanent Serbian trenches which lie south of Sarajevo with 755 tanks, armoured personnel carriers and artillery.

However, Bosnia is not Somalia. The geography, ideal for guerrilla warfare, would tend to favour the Serbs. But even if a short, sharp attack by an overwhelmingly superior force, backed by air power, delivered a stunning military blow to the Serbs, victory would not resolve the political and historical divisions.

Withdrawal from Bosnia under the threat of Serbian gunfire would be disastrous for the morale of the British Army. It would be better to take up one of the military options and attempt to give the Serbs a lesson in professional fighting.



Border disputes and old alliances point to war

FROM DESSA TREVISAN AND TIM JUDAH IN BELGRADE

WITH no end in sight to the conflict in Bosnia the threat of a full-scale Balkan war breaking out is fast becoming a real possibility.

The key flashpoints are Serbia's southern province of Kosovo, Macedonia and to a lesser extent Sandzak and Vojvodina. United Nations officials also fear that conflict may resume in the "protected" zones of Serb-held territories in Croatia.

After early successes the UN zones have degenerated into areas where, by its own admission, "anarchy and lawlessness prevails". The Croatian government is promising its people that the UN force will leave after its first year's term. The fear is that if they fail to evict the force diplomatically, terror-

ism may be used to encourage its departure. Far better armed and organised than a year ago, the Croatian government apparently believes that it can now destroy the Serb enclaves with its own military might. In response, the local Serb police force has grown tenfold since the UN took over. The fear of a new Serb-Croat war is now top of the UN agenda.

There seems little doubt that war will spread through Kosovo. Regarded by all Serbs as the cradle of their civilisation, the population of the republic's southern province is now more than 90 per cent ethnic Albanian. Today ethnic Albanians, led by Ibrahim Rugova, demand independence for Kosovo. Albanian leaders freely admit that independence would only be a stepping stone to union with Albania.

The southernmost republic of Macedonia is now becoming the focus of international alarm, with many now believing that war will start here and then spread to Kosovo. Greece objects to its recognition under the name Macedonia, arguing that the name implies territorial designs on Aegean Macedonia, taken by the Greeks during the Balkan war of 1912.

All observers agree that any conflict in Macedonia will drag in Bulgaria and Serbia and possibly Turkey and Greece. In Sofia there is little stomach for war but Bulgarians claim that Macedonians are in fact Bulgarians and so, if conflict begins, it will be difficult for them to stay out.

Three further possible flashpoints are Sandzak, Vojvodina and Montenegro. The former has a large Muslim population and is an historic province

Kosovo dogs Bush team's final days

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

THE Bush administration, with just seven weeks left in office, is not only planning military intervention in Somalia but also intensifying its efforts to contain the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Washington is growing increasingly worried that the conflict will spread to Kosovo and Macedonia, which both have big Muslim populations, threatening to drag Albania, Greece and Turkey into war. American intelligence has recently reported significant increases in Serbian military activity in Kosovo, where 90 per cent of the people are ethnic Albanians.

Late last month President Bush sent letters to John Major and President Mitterrand seeking support for the dispatch of an international force of monitors to Kosovo and for an international demand that Serbia restore Kosovo's autonomy. Mr Bush said he was "deeply troubled" by the continuing conflict and said a war in Kosovo "could cost thousands of lives".

Within the next two weeks Lawrence Eagleburger, the acting US Secretary of State, is expected to hold a meeting in Europe with Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary. They are likely to discuss a much greater preventive deployment of United Nations monitors in Kosovo and Macedonia, stronger warnings to Serbia to respect Kosovo's autonomy and a warning to Kosovo not to inflame feelings by pressing for full independence.

The Bush administration is also becoming increasingly determined to end Serbi-

an violations of the UN no-fly zone over Bosnia by military aircraft. Washington may press for a second UN resolution authorising enforcement of the no-fly resolution by military means if necessary.

Whether Bill Clinton, the president-elect, will change American policy after he takes office on January 20 remains to be seen. He has said nothing about Bosnia since his election, but during the campaign he said the United States could do much more to aid the Bosnian ground troops. There is no support among Americans for sending in troops, and Richard Cheney, the defence secretary, and General Colin Powell, the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, remain adamantly opposed to such a move.

Mr Clinton specifically suggested the administration should consider military intervention, including UN-authorized air strikes, to open Sarajevo airport and ensure the delivery of humanitarian aid, the use of military force to open Serbian detention camps and lifting the UN arms embargo on Bosnia so it could better resist Serbian aggression.

Lifting the arms embargo has the support of senators as diverse as Joe Biden, Democratic chairman of the Senate European affairs committee, and Robert Dole, the Senate's Republican minority leader. Paul Wolfowitz, a defence undersecretary, has also argued for lifting the embargo, but the administration rejected the idea as likely to prolong the fighting.

which straddles the Serbian-Montenegrin border. However, an uprising in Sandzak is unlikely because it would certainly be crushed within days.

Vojvodina, Serbia's northern province, has a high proportion of Hungarians but the area is overwhelmingly Serb. Many Vojvodina Serbs are opposed to the government of Slobodan Milosevic, the Serbian president, and, like local Hungarians, would like to see a restoration of the area's autonomy which he abolished.

The final possible flashpoint is Montenegro, the only remaining Yugoslav republic apart from Serbia itself. Independent until 1918 forces in favour of renewed independence are growing. However, any serious attempt to sever the link with Belgrade would certainly provoke a violent backlash from the Yugoslav army.

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The Palace, the press and the people. Final part: seeking an agenda for our future

Is there a path through the fog of lies?



Michael Shea (left) concludes his series with a warning of the dangers to society of continued press intrusion

Some years ago, in a speech to the Guild of British Newspaper Editors, I argued that if there was one thing that united everyone across the whole spectrum of political life, it was a shared contempt for the worst excesses of the British tabloid press. I went on, somewhat prematurely as it turned out, to warn that unless the press moved to put their own house in order, there were many, in every political party, who would be only too happy to do it for them. Nothing much happened, there were a few moves to curb the extremes. The Press Council and its successor the Press Complaints Commission, chained by their constitutions, remain emasculated, wringing their hands in the wings. We are again waiting for Sir David Calcutt, who will report next month.

The bias of truth and the straight untruths, both public and personal, that stream from the topless pages of the tabloids, must undermine many important basic values in our society. Of course, many readers claim that they don't believe a word of what they read in the popular press. On the other hand, my own experience is that most of them, including many who should know better, do believe some of it. They follow the strange notion that "there's no smoke without fire", rather than that the smoke is often a billowing fog of innuendo and humbug. My other belief is that a lot of people who should be doing something about this treat the tabloids as a joke, and in any event see them but seldom. The problem is that for millions it is the only reading material that enters their houses. If they are also the tribesmen of the people, God help the people.

To continue my metaphor, the fire has recently been fuelled by the reality, as broken marriages and unfortunate behaviour have hit certain members of the royal family. But where will the detailed reporting of all this private tragedy lead? Do the media as a whole, do the tabloids, have an agenda for our future, for the road on which they are taking us? Do the moralising to which we have been subjected lead us to any definite conclusion?

The timing of the prime minister's statement last week concerning the Queen paying tax and reimbursing the Treasury for much of the costs of certain members of the royal family, which we all must accept marks a turning point in the 20th-century history of the royal family, has been criticised by those whose daily task is to find something to belittle or destroy.

The fact of the matter is, and this is an outside view since I obviously have no knowledge of the discussions that have taken place between the Palace and Number 10 Downing Street, that no timing could be right. Earlier: too early. Later: too late. I have no doubt that most journalists and photographers who regularly cover royal events would agree that the Palace press office, in making media arrangements for more than a thousand individual royal engagements every year, operates with great efficiency and 99 per cent effectiveness. But there will always be the other 1 per cent when things go wrong. My experience always was that this tended to be the result, not of press office inefficiency because the staff there are highly experienced, past masters of looking out for pit-

When are people going to stand up and say: 'Enough'?

falls, but of the press office being overruled by other quarters both within and without the Palace, who wished things to be done with traditional protocol.

The prime minister's announcement was welcomed by, among others, Tony Benn (the former Viscount Stansgate) as being a move towards republicanism. That was a timely reminder that the supreme keeper of the madhouse of politics of what might just be — a nightmare scenario of a President Thatcher, or President Kinnock, or Hattersley or Howe or President Gerald Kaufman. Let us leave that prospect to that tiny fringe, those latter-day Willie Hamiltons, who might espouse it until they worked out the huge costs and consequences and divisions that the election of such a person would bring.

What is of more immediate importance, however, is the future relationship, not between the Queen and people, because I believe that is fundamentally



Monarchy at bay: the Queen looks pensive during Derby week (with Michael Shea, right) but where will the detailed reporting of her family's private tragedies lead?

sound, but between both of them and the press that seeks to interpret and inform. We can be reasonably confident that the electronic media and the broadsheets will see where sense lies and where a further harassment or undermining of the Sovereign's role might devastate much of what matters in this country. There is now a growing realisation that the re-building of Windsor Castle is, indeed, largely a matter for the nation. The Queen only uses as the state uses the rooms that were destroyed. She uses them as she uses Holyrood — which is also nominally the Queen's palace — but which is being used, for example, as a venue of the European summit in Edinburgh next week. In similar vein, we would not insist that John Major rebuild Number 10 if it, too, were gutted by fire.

No, the crucial factor is going to be, particularly now that the majority of the costs of the younger members of the royal family will be reimbursed to the Treasury, whether

these and the rest of the family will be left to sort out their problems with discretion and in peace. Additionally, will the mass circulation tabloids report with decency and accuracy the Queen's public activities and duties without always going for the unpleasant, the devious and the bad? I am not optimistic, given how the Chancellor of the Exchequer, for example, has been harassed on private matters over the past week.

Those in the service of the royal family, or in some way involved with them, know what it is like to be hounded by the media. Members of the family have a security system to protect them, but the experiences of Linda Towndley, the former maid to the Princess Royal, who told a special parliamentary committee yesterday how reporters laid siege to her brother's home for four days after the disappearance of some of the princess's private correspondence, and my own harassment at my private home or when I was taking my children to school

when I was the centre of a story, are minor examples of what is an abhorrent daily occurrence for ordinary people who attract media attention.

Both the level of intrusion and the means sometimes employed — bugging, telephoto lenses on private property, and even suborning (in other words, plain bribing) of individuals to provide stories (there are many examples) is surely deeply obnoxious if it is not yet illegal.

Fact and fiction, as I said earlier, run into each other, camouflaged by exaggeration and distortion. Repetition of inaccurate stories gradually makes them difficult if not impossible to dislodge. When are people right across the political and social spectrum (and not just in the cause of the monarchy, since no one, least of all the Palace, I imagine, wants a special rule for them) going to stand up and say: "enough"? Privacy is the first victim of the ongoing media wars.

There must surely be an end to media representatives entering private property without consent, placing bugs or other devices in private property, or as Calcutt has already stated, taking photographs or recording voices of individuals on private property without their knowledge or consent. The Sun newspaper and others will probably object. They, after all, used to call me the "anti-press secretary" for daring to suggest that, when I argued for self-restraint, I was in effect arguing for censorship. While to my mind being attacked by The Sun was always a distinct feather in my cap, I have to say that I spent several years behind the Iron Curtain, particularly in Ceausescu's Romania with its absurd puppet-like press, and I am, in consequence, second to none in standing in defence of press freedom. In last week's Spectator, Anthony Holden argued that the Palace should, if it is not seeking to get any special treatment following Calcutt, take legal action against any further

press lies. He noted that "The newspapers' motive for publishing royal dirt is money. Only the threat of substantial losses in court will deter them." I agree. That must be part of the way forward if more reasonable actions fail.

Perhaps after the new Calcutt report, the broadsheet newspapers, led by The Times, which will have to deny or condemn the behaviour of its sister papers, might make a first real start to the campaign. It won't work if the approach is through the battered, supine route of so-called self-regulation. It might just work, however, if the serious papers gave both the lead and the confidence to the politicians so that they could legislate as they must, without being slaughtered by the tabloids on their way to vote. As The Los Angeles Times wrote last week on another matter: "Be on your guard when the media cite the people's right to know as justification for violating the people's right to privacy." A good motto for us all.

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Lord Rothschild: "lessons of the Holocaust have faded"

Good fighter for a free and safe Europe

Lord Rothschild has a new role in the battle against anti-Semitism

The perfect figurehead has been found to lead the fight against resurgent neo-fascism and anti-Semitism in Europe. To the surprise and undisputed delight of the Jewish community, Lord Rothschild, 56, has agreed to become president of the Institute of Jewish Affairs, the leading Jewish research body outside Israel.

His decision is perceived as a significant departure. He has been a helper at Anglo-Jewish community functions and events for as long as he can remember, but this is the first time he has agreed to head a Jewish organisation such as the Institute.

It is no accident that he has chosen a body which successfully bridges the secular and religious worlds. Lord Roth-

schild, who is head of the English branch of the Rothschild family, says: "I would not like to disguise that I am first and foremost a secular Jew. I think perhaps I am taking being a Jew in every sense more seriously, but I can do that mainly in a secular way. I do not want to pretend that it is anything else."

The Institute, 50 years old last year, is the oldest study centre of its kind and its reports carry considerable influence. Its brief is to research political and social issues linked to the Jewish diaspora. Recently these have focused on the rise in anti-Semitism and neo-fascism across Europe. As a boy, Lord Rothschild suffered the usual anti-Semitic taunts that any Jewish child can expect, and still encour-

ters prejudice today. It never fails to shock. "I run into my fair share of anti-Semitism," he says. "It seldom happens face to face. But quite often, say in restaurants and clubs, I listen to conversations going on which are anti-Semitic at the next door table. When I hear it, I feel astonished, amazed and appalled."

What he describes as the "battering" rise in European anti-Semitism is reflected in recent research by the Institute and the Board of Deputies of British Jews. "I felt we had learnt the lessons of the Holocaust," he says. "But my confidence in feeling that has

been tremendously undermined by events we are seeing every day around us, particularly in the past few months."

Although the recent rise of neo-fascism has an obvious anti-Semitic content, he believes it embraces discrimination of a broader nature, taking in many, if not all, minorities.

Like many Jews, secular and religious, Lord Rothschild is grappling with the questions of Jewish identity stimulated by such phenomena. For a Jew who wishes to avoid any return to a ghetto, but has little in the way of traditional Jewish

learning, the quest for a strong identity is unceasing.

"I am not a great fighter of assimilation. Nor am I pro-assimilation," Lord Rothschild says. "I am just liberal towards those who choose this route. I believe that if you live in a liberal community of the kind that exists in this country, it is a mistake to fight assimilation. I also feel that the history of Jews who have not assimilated has often been unhappy, through anti-Semitism and other factors, for long, long periods of time. Although assimilation is not in itself an answer to anti-Semitism."

Israel is important, he believes, because it provides an alternative for those who do not want to assimilate. His commitment to Israel is unwavering. Yad Hanadiv, the Rothschild family foundation, is involved in up to 20 major projects in Israel, but until the opening of the Supreme Court, a gift of the foundation, last month, Lord Rothschild does not recall the charity taking such a public platform since the opening of another of its gifts, the Knesset building, where parliament sits, in 1957.

Some observers at the Supreme Court were surprised to hear Lord Rothschild deliver a speech, partly in Hebrew, which he intends to start learning shortly. To his lasting regret, he had no Jewish religious education or upbringing to speak of, attending Eton and Christ Church, Oxford.

Lord Rothschild sometimes attends Rabbi Hugo Gryn's Reform synagogue in Marble Arch, central London. To a question about whether his descendants will follow him in his commitment to Judaism, he responds that three of his four children were in Israel with him for the Supreme

Court opening, along with more than 20 other members of his family.

"I thought this was a good showing, to get them all to go to Israel in the middle of term time, or during the working period before the holidays," he says. He declines to say more, and it would indeed be a brave person who would question the Jewish identity of anyone with the Rothschild name.

Lord Rothschild is heading preparations to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the birth of Mayer Amschel Rothschild, the father of the family as it is today. The family can however trace its history to Frankfurt in the 15th century. He said: "I do not think anybody dissociates the Rothschild name from being Jewish. Even if the candle at times has not flickered very strongly, it has kept going. If you look at other 19th-century Anglo-Jewish families, perhaps the same cannot be said for them."

As former chairman of the National Gallery board of trustees, a post he left to increase its influence at the highest levels of society and government. He says: "We should be involved in policy studies, planning for a European future which is free and safe for all minorities."

He believes he can make the institute's work more widely known and will try to increase its influence at the highest levels of society and government. He says: "We should be involved in policy studies, planning for a European future which is free and safe for all minorities."

RUTH GLEDHILL

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JERSEY EUROPEAN



Care with cannabis

THE news that Liz MacRory, who has multiple sclerosis (MS), has found that cannabis will relieve the pain of muscle spasticity and help with her bladder control — a weak bladder is one of the curses of MS — will interest the other 100,000 United Kingdom sufferers from the disease, as well as their doctors.

Mrs MacRory is now quite legally prescribed nabilone, a synthetic cannabis-type drug, on the NHS.

Cannabis, even in its purified forms, has an unpre-

dictable effect on mood and therefore has to be used with caution in patients who have become either elated or depressed, whether because of their temperament or, in the case of patients with MS, because of the damage done to the brain by the disease.

Fortunately in Mrs MacRory's case nabilone has made her more relaxed and cheerful. Patients particularly those who are still driving, would have to watch out for drowsiness, poor concentration, dizziness and even confusion and should be aware that the drug increases the action of alcohol. Nabilone as well as cannabis can damage the liver.

Passionate about pain

THE appeal by sado-masochists who were convicted and sentenced for privately indulging in sado-masochistic rituals has drawn attention to one of the more common sexual deviations. Magazines devoted to sado-masochism are the best-selling of all pornographic periodicals.

Sadism — which takes its name from the activities of the Marquis de Sade — is a condition in which people obtain erotic pleasure from inflicting pain. Masochism is pleasure derived from being hurt, restrained and/or humiliated. Its name is derived from the Chevalier Leopold von Sacher-Masoch. The coupling of the two names as sado-masochism is medically sound, for it is rare to find a patient who is either exclusively sadistic or masochistic. Sado-masochists usually find pleasure in other pleasures as well as sado-masochism — Sacher-Masoch, for example, was a fur fetishist.

Minor degrees of sado-masochism can be detected in many — some specialists suggest most — people. Its influences can be recognised in such benign forms as the henpecked husband who apparently willingly submits to his dominant wife, or vice versa; and in the more sinister crimes of indecent exposure or obscene telephone calls, in



MEDICAL BRIEFING
Dr Thomas Stuttaford

which the man takes satisfaction in trying to humiliate a woman. The division between the normal and abnormal in this aspect of sexual behaviour is difficult. Some people wish to be submissive, and this may be normal. But to fantasise about rape is obviously not. Frank sado-masochism becomes grossly abnormal when the ritual — and most of the behaviour centres on ritual — is actually dangerous, or when it ceases to be foreplay and becomes an end in itself. Carried to extremes, and particularly when combined with a psychopathic personality, it can turn people into some of the most dangerous criminals in the community: rapists and murderers.

Doctors only rarely see patients who have been badly beaten up. The gesture on the part of the dominant partner, the sadist, and the apparent acquies-

cence and pleasure in being humiliated of the masochist is in most cases all that is required to stimulate excitement.

It is agreed by psychologists that the origins of sado-masochism in adult life are laid down in childhood, but there the agreement ends. The popular view that it is an upper-class vice stemming from an early life in boarding schools in which corporal punishment was routine and ritualistic, and from rigid home backgrounds, is at the most only occasionally true. Anybody who visited a genito-urinary medical clinic would find that it is a sexual activity which is partaken by homosexuals and heterosexuals of both sexes, and transcends all class barriers. However, it does seem that the childhood background of sado-masochists was often unduly restrictive and over-disciplined.

Since most people find blatant sado-masochism difficult to understand or tolerate it is not surprising that its advocates have problems in finding partners. So long as there are women, and men, who are prepared to put on strange clothes, wave whips and even, for a fee, appear to take pleasure in either being theatrically dominant or submissive, there will be tenants who are able to pay the high rents in Notting Hill or Knightsbridge.



A champion's hurdle

THE concern for Desert Orchid's welfare has not been confined to the Queen Mother and hundreds of thousands of racegoers. It has been felt by people who have never been near a racecourse.

Human life, too, can be hazardous by volvulus, which is the sudden twisting of the intestine, a twisting which causes obstruction of the lumen — the passage through the gut — and a cut-off in the blood supply to the intestinal wall. In consequence gangrene of the gut may super-

vene. Any part of the gut can twist; the offending section in Desert Orchid's case was the small intestine, as it often is in humans, but the caecum or pelvic colon can be involved. The twisting frequently occurs around an adhesion, often a piece of scar tissue.

The signs of a volvulus are intestinal obstruction, cramping colicky pain, absolute constipation, retching, hiccups, vomiting and collapse. Characteristically, abdominal distension is greater in volvulus than in other forms of obstruction. Surgery to remove irreparably damaged gut, with maintenance of the correct fluid and electrolyte balance, is the only treatment.

Men may or may not think about sex every six minutes, but someone seems to think of doing a survey about it just as frequently. Alice Thomson reports

It is the secret sex life of the British male. He has intercourse twice a week and fantasises in the bath. He thinks about sex on average every 15.3 minutes but says that sex is less important than his car. He believes humour is more important in a woman than intelligence. The wealthier he is the more likely he is to enjoy sado-masochism and bondage. He has no idea if he is well-endowed. (*Men on Sex* survey, *Esquire* magazine, 1992.)

Sex surveys fascinate the British public. It all started in America 1948 with *The Kinsey Report*, a serious scientific study, which told a shocked pre-war world how many homosexuals there were and the prevalence of oral sex. In the 1960s Dr William Masters and Virginia Johnson published up-to-date statistics based on laboratory observations and questionnaires.

By the 1970s magazines once wedded to articles on knitting and cake decoration became devoted to in-the-bedroom statistics. Surveys on sexual behaviour now constitute an entire genre of journalism for the tabloids: even Edith Cresson, the former prime minister of France, has joined in, with her estimate that one in four men in Britain is homosexual.

Today, the National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles — the largest, most respectable and rigorous sexual survey ever carried out in Britain — is to publish its preliminary findings. The survey is of 19,000 people, evidently randomly selected, and has been funded by the Wellcome Trust. Its main aim is to provide information to help in the prediction and prevention of HIV infection. A subsidiary aim is to build a data base concerning sexual behaviour in an advanced society.

But can we believe what sexual surveys (even scientific ones) say? Do they really have any relevance to the British public other than to make them neurotic about their sex lives because they have never dressed up in a Spiderman outfit or covered their partner in ginger biscuits and cream?

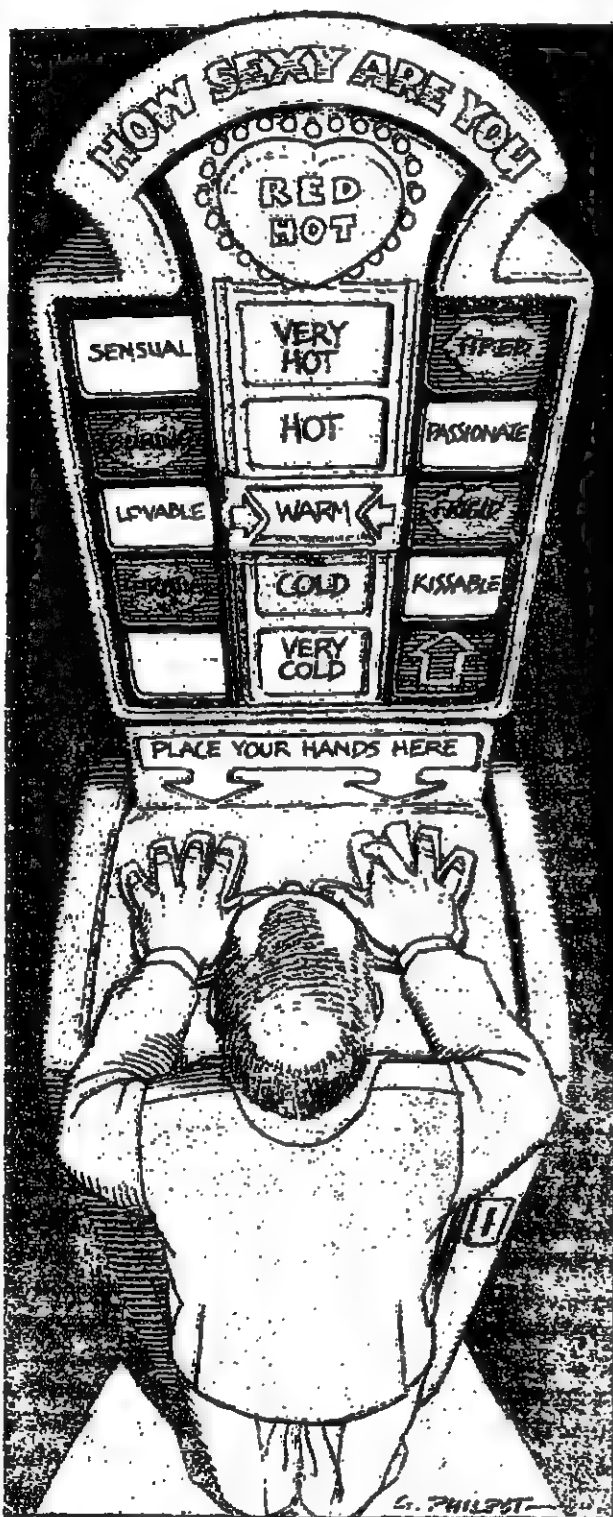
Like drinking, smoking and absence from work, sex is one of those things that people are supposed to lie about, basing their answers on an ideal already given to them by previous sex surveys, or by a perceived norm. In a survey reported in the *Daily Express* in October, 61 per cent of men said that they were first attracted to a woman by her personality. Only 8 per cent of men said they looked for long, slim legs or a pretty face. Psychologists call this "motivational distortion": women call it fibbing.

After the rash of teach-yourself-good-sex videos, television and radio are making their contributions to the "is it sex education or is it titillation?" debate. Or, as Marge Clarke, the presenter of Carlton Television's *The Good Sex Guide*, would put it, they are marching in the "the aural sexual revolution".

Tonight a *Horizon* documentary called "The Truth About Sex", to be shown at peak time, will feature the most sexually explicit material ever on air in Britain, according to Max Whitby, the producer of the programme. The footage was taken by William Masters and Virginia Johnson in the mid-1950s when they were researching sexual dysfunction and strove to learn about the abnormal by understanding the normal. Jana Bennett, the editor of *Horizon*, says, "It is not shown with any erotic intent, or even effect", and believes viewers examine a fascinating "The programme examines a primary drive in all our lives, in the hope of unravelling something about the true nature of sex and sexuality," says Celia Lowenstein, its director, who says she thinks the Masters and Johnson footage should now be shown "mainly because it is their work".

Britain's biggest sex survey, which announces its preliminary findings today, was commissioned by the Health Education Authority (HEA) and Social

Let's talk about sex (yes, again)



gists call this "motivational distortion": women call it fibbing.

Anne Hooper, a sex therapist and counsellor, and the author of *Anne Hooper's Ultimate Sex Guide*, was involved in numerous sex surveys when she worked for *Forum* magazine. "We did a penis survey, a vibrator survey and an oral sex survey and I was surprised by how honest people were pre-

pared to be," she says. "They seem to feel a certain responsibility. You get a nose for spotting the fantasy responses and the gags. Our penis survey — the average size was six inches — correlated almost exactly with *The Kinsey Report* and with medical surveys."

Ms Hooper believes sex surveys help to dispel people's fears. "In one survey we conducted only 29 per cent of

women said they experience orgasm due to love-making. That figure helps because it makes women who don't have orgasms during intercourse realise they are not freaks," she says.

When conducting face-to-face surveys, she says, researchers have to be careful not to appear shocked. "A very respectable woman told me that her problem was that her husband wouldn't hang her. It is vital to take that unusual story as seriously as the usual. And of course we had to rely on people who offered their services, which is why I am looking forward to the national survey because it is the first totally random survey to be carried out."

Eleanor Stephens, a sex psychologist and producer of Channel 4's *Love Talk* and *Men Talk* series, thinks that people tend to give the kind of reply they would like to think was true. "Women appear to be more truthful. They are happier exposing their vulnerabilities," she says. "Men are prone to see sex as competition."

More than 1,000 men applied to appear on *Men Talk* and discuss sex and body image. "There was a strong cultural factor," Ms Stephens says. "Northern men tended to be happier boasting about their sexual exploits and would be less squeamish about saying a woman's place was in the home. The liberal Southern man tended to be more influenced by the new man image and would be very conservative in his estimates of how many women he had slept with."

"Men often say they practise safe sex when what they mean is they would like to practise safe sex but somehow haven't got round to it."

No survey can give a reliable definition of British sex life, according to Ms Stephens, but they are important because they stimulate discussion and can point to national trends. "The British are far too squeamish about discussing sex, which causes a lot of unhappiness and confusion. Sex education is vital if we are to stop HIV and teenage pregnancy."

"If people can have fun reading these surveys with their friends and chatting about the issues, then they are worthwhile," she says. "And if they prove certain trends, they

provide ammunition for those trying to predict and prevent the Aids epidemic."

Dr Janet Holland has spent the past four years carrying out a qualitative in-depth investigation with 150 young women aged 16 to 21 in London and Manchester for *Women Risk and Aids Project* (Wrap), at a cost of £77,000.

Each woman was interviewed for up to two hours on sexual practice, feelings and what they knew about HIV. "Our main findings were that there is a lot of unsafe sexual activity among young people. They want sex to be spontaneous and romantic and condoms don't fit the image. So now we know what areas we need to tackle."

As a social scientist Dr Holland believes she has to operate as if the women are telling the truth. "We weren't going in there to trick them, and if they felt embarrassed by any question we would stop."

Women appear to be more truthful. Men are prone to see sex as competition

queers as far as I'm concerned."

Dr Peter Davis, a sociology lecturer at Essex university and the co-founder of project Sigma, agrees with Dr Holland that the phraseology of questions is vital. Sigma has been running since 1987 and has involved interviewing 1,000 homosexual and bi-

sexual men, each man for ten hours in total, about their sexual behaviour in the light of HIV. "Instead of asking them, 'Have you ever had sex with a woman?', you must say, 'When did you last have sex with a woman?'"

Human life, too, can be hazardous by volvulus, which is the sudden twisting of the intestine, a twisting which causes obstruction of the lumen — the passage through the gut — and a cut-off in the blood supply to the intestinal wall. In consequence gangrene of the gut may super-

Whereas things that reflect well, like athletic sex, tend to be over-estimated," Dr Davis says. He is concerned that the national survey's results are not going to be accurate enough. "I believe they had problems getting participants and I can see why. When I asked my group if they would

like to participate, over half of them said no. And of those who said they wouldn't mind a third said they would not admit they were homosexual."

Dr Davis says the type of interviewer used is also critical. "Some people only admit something to a woman, others to a man. We found that the people we interviewed were far more forthcoming if the interviewer was gay."

And what of *Cosmopolitan*, the magazine that launched a thousand sex surveys and, in 1990, conducted one of the largest to date? Fifteen thousand people responded to the questionnaire and almost everyone took it very seriously, according to Marcelle D'Argy Smith, *Cosmo's* editor. "The problem about all sex surveys is that they are seen as being salacious and only good for a titbit," she says. "Our main reason for carrying out this survey was to know about our readers and the way trends change from decade to decade. We found out that a fifth had lost their virginity by 15, and that 8 per cent had experienced incest, mostly involving brothers. The statistics are fascinating. They reassure groups of people that they are not alone while providing serious sociological data."

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Philip Howard

Correct pronunciation of the English language is a very stressful subject

English pronunciation is a minefield for native speakers as well as foreigners. Every time an Englishman opens his mouth, he enables other Englishmen, if not to despise him, at any rate to place him in some social and class pigeonhole. It is widely regarded as an error and a social and perhaps even a moral solism to stress laméntable and controversy on their second syllables. But lamént is stressed on its second syllable, and it would be a feat of tongue-twisting acrobatics to manage to pronounce controversial on its second syllable.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer prefers to stress his surname on its second syllable. Lamónt by analogy with lamént. This annoys Scots as much as Sassenachs who pronounce Loch as a homophone of lock, instead of with the velar fricative at the end, as in the German *ach*. Lamónt is a Scots and Northern Irish name, derived from the Old Norse words *lag* meaning law and *mann* or man. His name means that he is the man who lays down the law, and in Scottish pronunciation the stress comes naturally on its first syllable. However, a man is entitled to do what he wants with his name and its pronunciation, provided he is prepared to take the consequences in misunderstanding and offence among other tribes of pronouncers. Winston Churchill, splendidly idiosyncratic pronouncer of Nazi and Goebbels and other names of scorn, declared: "Everyone has a right to pronounce foreign names as he chooses." The same right must be extended to foreigners mispronouncing English names such as Featherstonehaugh, and even Scottish names.

These are controversial pin-points, even for native speakers. I had a letter from a friend who is trying to arrange a large family gathering, and commenting on the take-up of RSVPs, wrote: "Two couples are very doubtful because they might be combining." What could she mean? That they were considering sharing transport to the ghastly occasion? That they were going to be away on holiday together? That they were hastily looking for a previous engagement of a gang-bang kind, into which we had better go no further in a family newspaper, to escape from the dreaded family gathering? Then the penny dropped, tardily. Both couples are in the agribusiness, if anything so uncertain and unprofitable as farming can still be described as a business in the extreme acceptance of the word. Their combining aggroat needed to be stressed on the first syllable of combining, not the second, indicating that they might be polishing off the last straw of harvest with their combine harvesters.

Sometimes English gives a hint of the stress required for the right sense by the spelling. Reveal and revelation indicate the shift of stress, so that who runs on tip-toe may read. And so does the shift in spelling from maintain to maintenance. But very few spellings do. Consider the shift in stress from *atom* to *atomic*, or the triple shift from *photograph* to *photographer* to *photographic*. Pronouncing English "correctly" is a lifetime's work for a native. For a foreigner it is impossible.

Many English words are homographs but heterophones: they are spelled/spelt exactly the same, but stressed and pronounced differently depending on their different meanings and parts of speech. There are no clues in the spellings. You have to work out the stress of words such as *desert*, *minute*, *present*, and *collect* from their contexts, and native readers are sometimes going to get them wrong.

Because of the phonology of their mother tongues, German speakers device final voiced consonants. From an interview with the punk rocker Johnny Rotten in *The Independent Magazine*: "At this point Nora appears to say: 'You will not vom much, John, after the crap you had earlier.' 'Crap?' You don't talk about things like that in public, you know? 'There has, though, been a misunderstanding. 'I am talking about the crap you bought on the beach, John.' Nora explains. 'The interviewer realises she is saying "crab". Pronunciation is a stormy sea in which we all swim, and sometimes sink.

The enquiry into Matrix Churchill will never get to the bottom of the scandal, says Vernon Bogdanor

Whitewash or witch-hunt?

No one disputes the seriousness of the charges being investigated, declared Michael Heseltine of the Matrix Churchill affair in the House of Commons on November 23. It has been alleged that ministers have broken the Nuclear non-proliferation treaty, as well as their own guidelines on selling arms to Iraq, that they have systematically misled Parliament and the public, and have been prepared to connive at the imprisonment of innocent men. It is in everyone's interest, not least that of the ministers concerned, that these allegations be dealt with speedily and effectively. How should this best be done?

The right procedure would be to establish a statutory tribunal as provided for by the Tribunals of Inquiry (Evidence) Act of 1921, for matters of "urgent public importance". Such a tribunal would have the powers of the High Court, or in Scotland, the Court of Session, with regard to the examination of witnesses and the production of documents.

Unfortunately, however, the government has chosen to establish a non-statutory enquiry under Lord Justice Scott, similar

to that set up after the Profumo affair in 1963 under Lord Denning. But an enquiry of this type is unlikely to be able to establish the truth or to secure public acceptance of its findings. Witnesses will not be examined on oath, and those against whom allegations are made will be unable to check the evidence brought against them by cross-examination, and to rebut it. So it will be difficult for any fair-minded person to determine whether the allegations are justified. Therefore, if Lord Justice Scott does not wish to make adverse findings against those who cannot fully defend themselves, he will be accused, however unfairly, of a "whitewash". Being unable to exculpate the accused ministers, he will fail to allay public disquiet.

It is for this reason that the Royal Commission on Tribunals of Inquiry chaired by Lord Justice Salmon, declared in 1966 that it was "extremely difficult, if not practically impossible" for an enquiry of the

Denning type to establish the truth. For, if it is "felt justified in making an adverse finding against anyone, that person would and the public might also feel that he had a real grievance in that he had no chance of defending himself—accordingly the truth may remain hidden from the light of day." Its conclusion was unequivocal: "No Government in the future should ever in any circumstances whatsoever set up a Tribunal of the type adopted in the Profumo case to investigate any matter causing nationwide public concern."

That the worries of the Salmon Commission were not merely theoretical can be shown, not only from the Denning enquiry, but also from the Crichton Down enquiry of 1954. The latter was conducted by Sir Andrew Clark, QC, a former Conservative parliamentary candidate, said to have been the only man able to lose Barnet for the Conservatives. His report has been shown by I.F. Nicolson in *The Mystery*

of Crichton Down (Clarendon Press, 1986) to be vitiated by serious mistakes both of fact and of law. Indeed, Sir Andrew succeeded, in the very first paragraph of his factual narrative, both in misdating the year in which Crichton Down was acquired by the Air Ministry, and in falsely asserting that the land was "compulsorily acquired". Sir Andrew, a bitter opponent of bureaucracy, attacked in his report, the integrity of civil servants who were unable to make public their side of the case.

In the absence of proper judicial procedures, officials and perhaps private citizens too may be exposed to similar vilification by the Scott enquiry. In the House of Commons on November 23, Robin Cook, attacked by name an official who had worked with John Major, both at the Foreign Office and in 10 Downing Street, while Keith Hampson attacked the probity of Paul

Henderson, the managing director of Matrix Churchill, even though Henderson had withdrawn his prosecution against him. In neither case could those attacked defend themselves.

The Denning Report of 1963 has provided scurrilous entertainment for generations of undergraduates, yet, since the witnesses were not on oath, there is no reason to believe their evidence, especially as they had financial motives for producing stories which could later be sold to the newspapers. Lord Denning admitted the difficulties involved in establishing the truth. He had to act as "detective, inquisitor, advocate and judge". He had no doubt, however, that "I have been told as much truth without an oath as if it were on oath," a statement which those unable to accept Lord Denning's belief in his own judicial infallibility might find difficult to accept.

It was precisely because of these problems that the Salmon

Commission argued in 1966 that any future nationwide crisis of confidence should be investigated by a statutory tribunal. Such a tribunal would examine witnesses, who should be legally represented, on oath. Witnesses would be informed beforehand of allegations made against them, and allowed to cross-examine those making them. They should be granted immunity from later civil or criminal proceedings, since the tribunal's purpose would be to investigate the allegations against ministers in order, in the words of the Attorney-General, "to examine whether ministerial responsibility should be pinned in any particular area".

The government has said that if Lord Justice Scott finds his powers inadequate it will convert the enquiry into a statutory one as provided under the 1921 Act. But the onus should not be put on the judge. Instead, the government should immediately convert the Scott enquiry into a statutory tribunal. This is the only way in which the Matrix Churchill affair can be authoritatively resolved.

The author is Reader in Government, Oxford University.

Making do on £6 million a year

Bernard Levin offers his advice to a canny insurance salesman on how to dispose of a small fortune without really trying

There is a man called Peter Wood, who earns six and a quarter million smackers a year: breathless with excitement, he has been trumpeting the news to the nation, and declaring that "The only people who will complain are ill-informed moaning minnies," adding, in a manner that strongly suggests he has entered for The Non Sequitur of the Year Contest, that those who criticise him for soaking up so much spondulicks are "saying that we ought to become like the former Soviet Union".

Well, to start with, it is sad to see a man with so much to jingle in his pockets who talks only in clichés, but no doubt he would say he doesn't get his money for writing. Nor does he, he sells insurance. Oh, not door to door, of course, nothing so plebeian for him ("Well now, you are covered, and so is hubby, but how about the doggies — you can't keep them on the leash all the time, or the moaning minnies will start complaining"); no, he is nothing less than the head of the insurance subsidiary of the Royal Bank of Scotland: there's glory for you!

The smackers, we learn, are made up from a derivative annual salary of £285,000, augmented by bonuses (which his company must be well content to pay) of £6 million a year: even more breathless and pleased with himself, he has announced that he expects the same gross income (I'll say it's gross) next year and the year after, after which he believes it may fall; kindly feel sorry for the poor bastard — it's clogs to clogs in three years now, not generations, and he is already thinking of ways of keeping the margin on the bread. He threatens us, so help me, with a new company which would sell personal loans over the telephone.

Now I had better make something clear before we continue. If, three years hence, the phone rings and I find some greasy sweet-talker at the other end I assume that, with the insurance wheeze, Wood won't be doing the actual selling) who

is offering me a loan on the most remarkably generous terms — say, 40 per cent to start with — there will be an uproar that will shake the topless towers of the Royal Bank of Scotland. (Why, incidentally, is it "Royal"? Poor sinking Barclays aren't royal, much less NatWest and the Co-op, and don't tell me they don't deserve it — of course they don't, but who says the tartan lot do?)

Anyway, when Little Jack Horner has finished telling the world how he put in his thumb and pulled out a plum and said "what a good boy am I", there is something different I want to explore. Even at the worst, it seems, Mr Wood will, over three years, earn, with salary and bonuses, something like £19 million. I assume that the figures are stated pre-tax, but a man so skilled with money would, of course, ensure that all lawful reductions of tax were properly claimed, so let us guess that one way or another he will be sitting on something getting close to £15 million jummy-goblins. My question is: what does a man actually do with that amount of dough?

We can rule out some obvious things at once: he could, for instance (according to which sweetshop he patronises), buy 60 million Mars Bars, though he would be frightfully sick long before he finished consuming them. Or he could see *Me and My Girl* at the Adelphi Theatre every night it is playing, for 1,790 years. (Only 995 years if he takes his wife every time, but she might anyway jib halfway through.) Or he could change all the money into £20 notes and put them end to end, when he would discover that they stretch for 1,420 miles. Or he could buy 9,375,000 copies of my latest book and give them to his friends as Christmas presents. (You say nobody has got 9,375,000 friends? Don't be naive: a man with £15 million pounds has at least that number of close friends, and three times as many casual ones.)



But now let us be serious. I Timothy, 6, vii, says "For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." As it happens, I have heard those ominous and profound words intoned only a few days ago in Westminster Abbey, at the memorial service

for Geraint Evans. They were true even for him, but he certainly got close to breaking the rule, for what he created between his coming into the world and his leaving it was a massive legacy, welded to the whole world, of joy, beauty, integrity, music (particularly

Mozart) and laughter. Beat that, Wood. What will he do with it? He will have complete comfort, of course, and why not? Luxurious travel, likewise. If he collects anything, he can bid with confidence. The 1896 Haut Brion will slip down a treat. The

children will want for nothing. Big-game shooting is frowned upon by the Politically Correct, but he could have the most splendid safari. Of course, people do win large sums on the pools, and even larger sums in their imagination; but the highest jackpot the pools offer is around £2 million and although anyone could live comfortably on the interest it doesn't compare with Mr Wood's monster pile.

But I might as well go on like this for dozens of paragraphs, without causing the thinnest dent in Mr Wood's mountain of moolah or his need of it. I can understand the great empire builders — the Murdocks and Kerry Packers and Rowlands and their like — precisely because they are empire builders, and weep, like Alexander, when there are no more worlds to conquer: they are, however oddly, making something. While they are building their empires they naturally acquire enormous quantities of money, but that, I am certain, is not the primary purpose. (If it were, would Tiny Rowland have spent millions just to change his grocer? Dammit, would Rupert have bought *The Times*?) But Mr Wood, as far as I know, is not planning a takeover of the Bank of England, followed by Credit Lyonnais, the Bundesbank and Fort Knox.

Then why is he so suffocatingly pleased with himself for notching up six and a bit million quid a year? It is true, we must agree, that you and I could not do what he did, for the obvious reason that we do not have that talent. But the question is the same: what can he not do with a few hundred thousand, even a million or two or three, that he has to have £15 million to do it?

"Money speaks all languages," goes the proverb. But I demand a simultaneous translation; I do not believe that Mr Wood is a real miser, sitting at home beside an enormous chest running his doubloons through his fingers, but neither do I believe that he is putting away a dozen million quid or so for when the hard times come. My bewilderment may be enough for him to class me among the moaning minnies, but I think you will agree that there are more questions than answers in my story today. Here is another relevant proverb: "There are no pockets in a shroud."

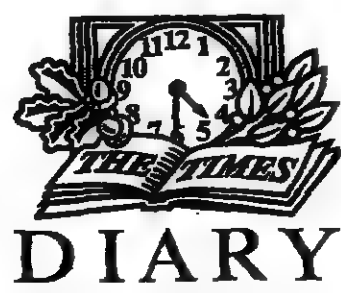
Reopening the batting

THE MCC, currently embroiled in the row over David Gower's exclusion from the tour of India, is about to be bowled a googly on another contentious cricketing issue. The redoubtable Rachael Heyhoe Flint, former captain of the England women's cricket team, is preparing to put the question of women members back on the agenda at the next annual meeting of the MCC.

Heyhoe Flint, who had lunch at Chequers with John Major on Sunday, was heavily defeated two years ago in her attempt to become the first woman member. But she has not given up. "The MCC said they would address the issue and they have had the time to do so," she says.

"This is not just for me. It is for all women around the world who care about cricket and want to become a member of the greatest cricket club in the world."

Gillan may have the ear of the prime minister, whom she first met at a cricket match, but she has hit a sticky wicket with Parliament's most famous female cricketer, Cheryl Gillan, who became the first woman MP to play for the House of Commons team, takes an opposite stance to Heyhoe Flint. "I



Tax demerency

BRITAIN'S newest taxpayers will no doubt be delighted to hear that they are in line to receive the full complement of benefits and discounts under the new council tax. The royal family's regal apartments, palaces, castles and country houses inevitably fall into the highest category — H — for payment of the tax but, like other large properties, they will qualify for transitional benefits.

Under the poll tax, for instance, the Prince and Princess of Wales currently pay a total of £544. Under the new tax, they will eventually be forced to pay £1,026. But, says Rod Smith, revenue manager for Cots-wold district, the Prince and his wife are entitled to claim the transitional benefit, which would leave them with a total bill of no more

than £730 for each of the next two years.

According to Smith, the Princess Royal, whose Gatcombe Park property comes under neighbouring Stroud council, can also claim the 25 per cent discount as a single person — if she can prove that no one else over 18 lives at the house. The only member of the family firm who may lose out, it seems, is Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother at Clarence House. "There are no special subsidies for pensioners," the ministry says.

As the IRA brought London's West End to a standstill on Tuesday night, the Dunkirk spirit prevailed at the New Empire nightclub on the Tottenham Court Road, where Channel 4 was filming a comedy show featuring Tom Jones as guest singer. As soon as the bomb scare was announced, Jones kicked off an impromptu concert. To the accompaniment of a controlled explosion, he belted out "It's Not Unusual", a fitting, if depressing signature tune.

Stakhanovism

THE Bolshoi Ballet's five-week season at the Albert Hall is beginning to resemble a Napoleonic invasion. The ballet, which is flying 160 artists to London, is leaving nothing



Society dancers are out, recession-style fund-raising is in. For example, Lady Tryon, left, is hosting a sale of posh frocks at her home in Great Durnford near Salisbury today and tomorrow. Dale "Kanga" Tryon, who insists the sale is no reflection on her dress business, is cutting prices by half. The proceeds will go to the Leonora children's cancer appeal in memory of Leonora Kwaichibail, centre, the daughter of Lady Ramsey.

to chance. It has chartered a special plane to fly in two tonnes of its own music, under the personal supervision of Vladimir Onoprienko, the Bolshoi's music librarian.

The scale of the operation is daunting: the musicians of the 75-piece BBC Symphony Orchestra, which will accompany the ballet in January. The performances will be broadcast on Radio 2. "It is an unusually gruelling schedule," says Peter Nutt, Radio 2's head of live music. "The musicians will have to perform six days a week, including a matinee on Saturdays. By mid-February they will have played 13 different ballets. The brass section in particular is worried about sore lips."

● Sonic the Hedgehog has fallen foul of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. Sega, which makes the hedgehog computer game, has been ordered by the council to remove its giant poster of the squashed hedgehog which is plastered across its office building on the corner of London's Cromwell Road and Earl's Court Road. The junction is one of the capital's premier advertising sites and is said to be the busiest crossroads in Europe.

"It has upset children and some councillors also said 'yuk'," says a spokesman for the council. Sega has taken umbrage. "It is there to promote the plight of hedgehogs," says a spokesman haughtily, if somewhat implausibly.

I always get a bit run down around Christmas.





LONG DISTANCE JAW

The EC debate may sound dull, but it could be decisive

The Maastricht marathon has just begun. Runners jostled a little for position on the starting line but, once the gun was fired, they set off at a brisk pace. This race will run and run, since the finish cannot take place until May. Judging by the first two days' performance, however, the competitors are unlikely to run out of puff.

Boredom will be the biggest enemy. Bill Cash may have no problem talking for over two hours, as he did on Tuesday; he was still, he said, "only a fraction into the argument". But government whips were apparently gratified by the number of MPs who decided to have dinner rather than hear him out. Six months of such filibustering may sap the motivation of the sturdiest Eurosceptics.

Their organisation, however, is excellent. With Michael Spicer, a former minister, at their head, and Mr Cash doing the footwork, the Eurosceptics' campaign is unlikely to fall apart in the lobbies. Labour, too, is determined to keep the government guessing about its voting intentions. Tory whips have an anxious six months ahead.

As John Major bustles around Europe trying to find agreement for next week's Edinburgh summit, life at home is becoming more difficult. He is under enormous pressure to return from Edinburgh with Britain's budget rebate intact; any reduction will cause fury in his party's ranks. But the cost will almost certainly be an increase in the EC's budget overall. Since the money is required to help the poorer countries towards economic convergence and since convergence is required for monetary union, this will not go down well with the sceptics. They will argue that EMU is nonsense anyway and Britain will take no part in it: so why should the British taxpayer subsidise the Irish, the Spaniards and the Greeks?

Meanwhile, subsidiarity seems to have dropped down the Edinburgh agenda. This too will displease Tory MPs, particularly the

waverers who were induced to vote for the government in the paving debate on Maastricht on the grounds that a firm declaration on subsidiarity would be secured at Edinburgh. The government has been selling Maastricht on what it is not; the only positive aspect of the treaty, according to ministers, is that it rolls back the powers of Brussels. As drafted, this is far from clear.

In Germany yesterday, the Bundestag ratified Maastricht by an overwhelming majority, but also granted itself the right to be consulted before the country decides whether to enter monetary union. This has both amused and infuriated British Eurosceptics. On the one hand, it seems to set a precedent for national parliaments to attach conditions to ratification. If the Bundestag can do so, why not the House of Commons? On the other, Germany seems to have granted itself the same opt-out unilaterally that Britain had to win through tough negotiation and in return for other concessions.

Most useful for the sceptics is the argument that Germany has now not really ratified Maastricht at all. In which case, why is the British Parliament wasting so much time discussing a treaty that Danes have rejected and Germans have wobbled out of? If Edinburgh clouds the issue still further, they hope that Labour will change its position from supporting Maastricht as the best treaty available to voting against it on the grounds that it is of questionable validity.

There will be frequent opportunities to vote the bill down between now and May: an amendment on the European central bank could win Labour support, and a referendum amendment ought to, though John Smith would have to change his stated position. As Mr Major races around the continent trying to salvage his presidency, he cannot afford to take his eye off the dull but possibly decisive debate at home.

RUSSIA IN WONDERLAND

Moscow's politicians are more alike than they look

The Congress of People's Deputies in Moscow this week has been billed as a fight to the death between the pro-Western democratic reformers who have run Russia since Boris Yeltsin dissolved the Soviet Union and the reactionary representatives of the "military industrial complex". Yet, despite the personal animosities so evident in the Russian congress, the difference between the policies likely to be pursued by the so-called reactionaries and the so-called reformers may not be so vast.

Consider the vicious parliamentary confrontation between Yegor Gaidar, the fervently pro-Western reformist prime minister, and vice-president Alexander Rutskoi. Only last week President Yeltsin had apparently concluded a deal with the Civic Union, the increasingly well organised political grouping behind General Rutskoi. Yesterday, speaker after speaker demanded Mr Gaidar's resignation, and General Rutskoi insisted that President Yeltsin must accept in full the Civic Union's programme to slow down the economic reform.

Unless the government offered easier credit and reintroduced price controls a collapse of industry was threatened, producing unemployment in the tens of millions, outbreaks of famine, and a final descent into chaos and civil war. Mr Gaidar countered with prophecies almost as chilling. His programme, he said, had confounded repeated predictions of "cold, hunger and social upheavals". To accommodate the demands of the industrial barons would be to guarantee "hyper-inflation".

There was a strong whiff of Alice in Wonderland about this whole affair. Behind the bombast, how genuinely different are the policies the two sides espouse? Mr Gaidar

warns of the risk of hyper-inflation, yet his own government's "ultra-monetarist" policies are delivering inflation of 25 per cent a month, equivalent to 1,400 per cent a year. The Civic Union warns of collapsing output without a retreat towards central planning; but output has already fallen by 20 per cent in the year since the start of the Gaidar programme — the same rate of decline as in each of the previous two years.

The truth is harsh for both sides. Neither the government nor the industrialists can relieve Russia's economic plight with any one programme. There will be more inflation and there will be further industrial decline whatever the government tries to do. While the Russian people gradually learn to work with markets, and the militarised economy is slowly transformed into one capable of meeting real human needs, the Russian government will inevitably have to manage a series of economic crises, rather than implement any clear-cut economic blueprint.

During this long period of transition, the Russian government's highest priorities should be to create private property and attract foreign investment. Success here depends less on monetary stability than on political guarantees. The West, in offering its assistance, should have three main goals. It should curb military exports and encourage political co-operation among the democrats who are fortunately still prominent in the Civic Union as well as the Gaidar government. A financial safety net should be designed that will prevent the armies of unemployed or refugees marauding around central Europe. Most of the rest is but rhetoric.

DARK BLUES

Freshers need tender loving care as well as supervision

Today's inquest into the death of Tracey Cole, the Oxford student found hanged in her college room in October, will force the university to confront its darkest fear: that it is not fit to look after the cream of the nation's youth. These sombre proceedings will be overshadowed further by the death of Henry Skelton, a New College undergraduate who died yesterday morning after falling from a second floor window, allegedly in a drug-induced trance.

Oxford's notoriety as a city of death is part of its myth, a caricature founded on superstition as much as fact. Wretched and completely unrelated incidents such as the suicide of Canon Gareth McLean last year and the murder of Rachel McLean last year have been spun into a ghastly tapestry, encouraging the cliché that Oxford is a place where talent destroys itself. The traumas suffered by students and dons at other universities are doubtless just as severe. But they rarely excite the same public fascination.

Nonetheless, Oxford is sufficiently concerned to have commissioned an internal investigation into the incidence of suicide. Its common rooms have buzzed with anxiety since the death of Miss Cole, barely a week after her arrival to study English.

Yesterday's fatal accident at New College will reawaken memories of Olivia Channon's death six years ago, which alerted dons to the extent of drug abuse among undergraduates. While Oxford remains an intensely competitive and privi-

leged institution, it has done a great deal in recent years to improve access to state school pupils and to debunk the pernicious Brideshead mythology. The pastoral care it offers to undergraduates is also far better than is often appreciated. A university counselling service and telephone helpline supplement the efforts of college tutors, some of whom devote many hours to the non-academic concerns of their students.

The strength of this system is its informality and decentralisation. Oxford colleges are families as well as scholarly communities which seek to nurture their young members with good fellowship and save them from excesses, be they of lonely misery or reckless self-indulgence. Dons should look at ways of enhancing this sympathetic culture, without inventing bureaucracies.

No university can prevent its students from taking lethal doses of drugs if they are determined to do so. Academics are good at playing uncle, bad at playing Big Brother. But new undergraduates would benefit from a more structured introduction to college life in their first weeks and the guarantee of a safer safety net thereafter.

Oxford could learn from the civilised tradition at St Andrews where freshers — known as *bejans* — are allotted two older students as academic parents, to provide guidance and a measure of supervision. Such a practice could easily be transplanted south of the border and would strengthen Oxford's collegiate ethos.

Curb on role of the conciliators

From Mr David Farnham

Sir, Through the Trade Union Reform and Employment Rights Bill the government plans to change the functions of Acas (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service). Clause 32 proposes to remove the particular requirement to encourage the extension, development and reform of collective bargaining from Acas's general duty to promote the improvement of industrial relations. This represents a fundamental, some might say historic, shift in declared public policy.

From the Whitely committee in 1917-18, through to the Donovan Commission in 1968 and the Employment Protection Act 1975, the state has supported and encouraged voluntary collective bargaining in the conduct of industrial relations. This was done by example in the public sector and by persuasion and the law in the private sector.

Since 1979, de facto public policy has seriously weakened collective bargaining and collective representation at work. Clause 32 will make this de jure.

The proposed change in the traditional role of Acas is a major reversal of accepted state policy on employee relations. It tacitly legitimises employer resistance to collective bargaining. It seems clearly to reject the state's responsibility for promoting fair play in wage-fixing and employment matters. And it manifestly ignores the fundamental imbalance of power between employers and employees in the labour market and the workplace.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID FARNHAM,
Sunnymead, Seagrove Bay,
Seaview, Isle of Wight.
November 27.

From Mr Ray Hurst

Sir, To justify her decision to end the long-standing policy of making local education authorities responsible for providing a careers service, Mrs Gillian Shepherd attempts to blame the present structure for deficiencies in careers guidance (reports, November 23, 24).

For many years the local authority careers service has been extending its guidance work with younger pupils despite unprecedented unemployment and inadequate government resources.

If the Secretary of State is so concerned about the quality of careers guidance, why has she excluded from the Trade Union Reform and Employment Rights Bill any requirement on the careers service to provide written summaries of vocational advice to young people, as envisaged in the Employment and Training Act 1973 but not introduced by the Conservative government?

She has sufficient powers under that Act to improve the quality of careers guidance without demolishing a structure which has served young people so well over many years.

Yours faithfully,
RAY HURST,
39 Corporation Road,
Redcar, Cleveland.
November 24.

Treasure hunting

From Mr Martin Beddoe

Sir, While those of us with an interest both in the law and in archaeology applaud further moves to restrict the wanton and careless use of metal detectors, it is misleading of those who advocate additions to the criminal law to suggest that the police want powers of arrest "which they do not have at the moment" (report, November 20).

Where users of metal detectors are found on land to which they have not been admitted by the owner they are, *prima facie*, committing the arrestable offences of (i) going equipped for theft (contrary to section 25 of the Theft Act 1968), or (ii) attempted theft, or (iii), if they remove items found thereby, theft itself.

After appropriate arrests by the police recently, successful prosecutions for such offences against metal-detector users have been pursued by the Suffolk Crown Prosecution Service. They have shown that these powers can be both considerable and effective in dealing with the menace of greedy and indiscriminate trespass on and disruption of valuable ancient sites and private property.

Yours faithfully,
MARTIN BEDDOE,
Fenners Chambers,
3 Madingley Road, Cambridge.

Ireland's example

From Mr Richard A. Clark

Sir, Mr Weston (letter, December 2) makes a sound point about proportional representation in Ireland. More than a week after voting in the general election, we still don't know who will form the government: the horse-trading continues as the minority parties jostle to control the majority. Yet on this side of the Irish Sea, there is a deafening and uncharacteristic silence from perhaps our greatest exponent of PR.

If Mr Paddy Ashdown is on holiday, I hope he is having better weather than we are.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD CLARK,
The Close, Pewsey, Wiltshire.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

Children's tests a problem for adults

From the Chief Executive of the School Examinations and Assessment Council

Sir, I have been concerned, although also amused, to see that some of your correspondents (November 20, 27) have been having difficulty with the mathematics and science questions which you printed on November 18, devised by SEAC for 7-year-olds' national curriculum assessment next summer.

I believe the problem has arisen because to understand the individual sheets designed for pupils' use, it is necessary to see the accompanying mark schemes and the instructions for teachers, which explain how the material is to be used in practice.

In the case of the algebra question, which seems to have caused the greatest puzzlement, the teacher will explain to the pupils that a friend has been doing a long calculation on a calculator and has pressed some keys incorrectly. It is a simple test of knowing how to cancel the last number entered, without clearing the whole calculation and was designed for bright 7-year-olds; part of the work they will have covered over the previous two years deals with how calculators function, including the notion of undoing a mistake.

Commenting on the science question, your correspondents are obviously correct that only spoons and drawing pins made from ferrous metals will be attracted by the magnet. The test instructions to the teacher make this clear, and in instances where children give an unexpected response, the teacher will discuss the answer with the pupil to find out if he or she does not understand about magnetic attraction, or has gone a step further and realises that there are some metals

which a magnet will not attract. In the second case, the child will be given credit.

I hope your correspondents will be reassured. SEAC takes great care before recommending tests to the Secretary of State, and is confident that they are realistic for 7-year-olds, while offering an appropriate challenge to the more able.

Yours faithfully,
HILARY A. NICOLLE,
Chief Executive, SEAC,
Newcombe House,
45 Notting Hill Gate, W11.
December 1.

From Mr Eddie Philpott-Kent

Sir, The answers to the three trivial calculator problems which defeat so many of your adult readers are surely blindingly obvious: -27 = for the first; +2 = for the second; +13 = for the third.

Isn't it depressing that so many people, including a teacher (letter, November 27), should rush to boast about their incompetence to deal with simple calculator manipulations?

Let us hope that the next generation will do better, though it seems they will have to be largely self-taught.

Yours sincerely,
E. PHILPOTT-KENT,
Holgate Farm, The Street,
Bunwell, Norwich, Norfolk.
November 28.

From Rosie Enock

Sir, The sums in *The Times* were easy. My daddy showed me them and they were pipsy.

Signed,
ROSIE ENOCK (aged 8),
Tremayne House, Warling Hill,
Hailsham, East Sussex.

Worth of schools' league tables

From Councillor P. H. Twyman

Sir, In her letter (November 30) about school examination league tables the headmistress of the Godolphin School refers to "a nonsense exercise, revealing large numbers of statistical errors".

According to Mr Eric Forth, Under Secretary of State for Education (*Hansard*, November 27), only six significant errors have been proved to have been the fault of the Department for Education or its contractors. Given that there were 4,600 schools covered in the tables, which were made up of a quarter of a million pieces of individual information, this strikes me as a pretty good standard of performance.

It certainly does not justify the somewhat hysterical response from the educational establishment, including the head of Godolphin School.

Yours faithfully,
P. H. TWYMAN,
Thrill House, 129 Minnis Road,
Birmingham, Kent.

From the Head Master of William Hulme's Grammar School

Sir, I am mildly interested in the perverse logic whereby John Patten denigrates the validity of the GCSE results in August (report, September 4) and builds assumptions of success and failure in schools on these very same statistics in November.

Yours faithfully,
P. D. BRIGGS, Head Master,
William Hulme's Grammar School,
Spring Bridge Road, Manchester 16.

Paying the piper

From Sir Peter Maxwell Davies,
President of the Composers' Guild of Great Britain

Sir, I was very disturbed to read in your Arts pages of November 25 ("Cuts that may mean curtains") the words of Mr Anthony Everitt, secretary-general of the Arts Council.

We will have to focus on what business would call its core business: support for artists and arts organisations. There are things we do that are not directly related to our support for artists and arts organisations, for example giving money for a composer to write a piece of music. So some difficult choices may have to be made.

So, the composer is not an artist, and is given money, not paid a professional fee for writing — the implications being, first, that this is a charitable act, and, secondly, that the "giving" is peripheral to the artistic scene. If this attitude had been taken towards composers' income and worth there would be precious little for the artists Mr Everitt apparently regards as being more central and deserving to play or sing.

Composers have been used to poor payment throughout musical history; but that such a view should emanate

From the Chief Executive, Calderdale and Kirklees TEC

Sir, It surely cannot be right that parents and pupils, industrialists and educationalists have precious little idea of the number, range and success of vocational courses being offered (or not) within schools.

There is an urgent need to ensure we reduce the academic/vocational divide. The league tables do nothing to achieve this.

Yours faithfully,
ALISTAIR GRAHAM,
Chief Executive,
Calderdale and Kirklees Training and Enterprise Council Ltd.,
Parkview House,
Woodvale Office Park,
Woodvale Road,
Brighouse, West Yorkshire,
November 19.

From Mr Rodney H. W. Cooper

Sir, I studied with interest the results of the first running of the John Patten Selling Stakes Hurdle ("School Report", November 19). What a lot of stables: what a lot of horses! Yet it seems to me that the favourites obliged each time.

May we hope that before the next running the handicapper will get to work or some trainers, let alone horses, will get discouraged and the bookies will clean up?

Yours faithfully,
RODNEY H. W. COOPER,
175 Ballards Way,
Addington Hills, Croydon, Surrey.

from the secretary-general of the British Arts Council is a downright scandal. The fees composers have earned from Arts Council commissions — small enough — have kept the wolf from the door, while some very important and ultimately successful music has been created.

Quite a few of my own published scores have on their title page "Commissioned with funds made available by the Arts Council of Great Britain"; without these funds the works would never have been brought into existence, and would not be now earning royalties for the tax man to claim.

However, this is not the point — the Arts Council can hardly be looking for some kind of roundabout financial return on its investments: it should be encouraging the performing and creative arts in areas where commercial sponsorship is difficult to obtain. It seems, however, that the value of musical composition, as such, is not appreciated in the highest places.

Yours etc.,
PETER MAXWELL DAVIES,
President,
Composers' Guild of Great Britain,
50 Hogarth Road, SW5.
November 27.

opposite page without resorting to bits of Latin, etc., in italics. I wonder if all your own staff can unhesitatingly read through these foreign phrases and know what they mean better than if they were written in English.

I don't share John Major's wish for a classless society, but as they are, your articles are for that class of people who were taught French, Latin or whatever language you decide to make use of.

Regards,
JOHN F. PUGSLEY,
30 Liverpool Road,
Kingston upon Thames, Surrey,
December 2.

Better screening for cervical cancer

From Dame Jill Knight, MP for Birmingham, Edgbaston (Conservative), and others

Sir, In the light of your December 1 report about the declining death rate from cervical cancer, we and many other MPs from all parties would like to point out that although about five million smear tests are taken each year from women to try to detect cervical cancer, the present test is acknowledged to be at least 10-15 per cent inaccurate and is at risk from human error.

This means that every year between 500,000 and 750,000 women are misled by their smear-test result. If they are not retested for some years, the cancer may well have progressed and may be untreatable. About 2,000 women each year die from cervical cancer.

With help from the charity Quest Cancer Trust, scientists at University College London have developed a computerised test which is more accurate and reliable, as well as cheaper. It relies upon a colour reaction in which the cancer cells are coloured deeply.

To fund final clinical trials of this new test, Quest needs £480,000 from the Department of Health — the general taxation raised in just 60 seconds. We hope that the Secretary of State for Health will now agree to fund this final trial which can save both anxiety and avoidable death from cervical and other cancers.

Yours sincerely,
JILL KNIGHT,
IAN MCCARTNEY (Labour),
ALEX CARLILE (Liberal Democrat),
House of Commons.

Contraception concern

From Dr D. E. Muffin

Sir, I understand that the government may extend the list that restricts the drugs which may be prescribed under the NHS. We have at present seven therapeutic categories of such drugs: the suggestion is that these will be extended to 17 — including contraception.

A limited list will narrow doctors' choice because the Department of Health says that "there are effective alternatives available at lower cost".

The number of unwanted pregnancies and terminations in the United Kingdom continues to cause concern. Most clinicians, I believe, would say there were advantages in the more modern, albeit more expensive, contraceptive pills: there appears to be firm scientific evidence that they involve less risk of complications.

Lists offer place cost first, without regard to long-term risk. There is also the possibility that economy will diminish research into newer drugs. One can only hope that therapeutic choice for contraception will be left alone.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID MUFFIN,
Brynmor Surgery,
Brynmor Terrace, Ammanford, Dyfed,
November 30.

Book club anomaly

From Mr Terry Maher

Sir, Harry Eyres (article, November 26) highlights one of the most spectacular anomalies of the book trade. The net book agreement now allows publishers, through the artifice of book clubs, to market newly published titles directly to the public at substantial price discounts with "no obligation" to purchase further books. Bookshops, which are keen to make the same offer, are denied the opportunity.

In the Alice in Wonderland world of the net book agreement, publishers praise book clubs for bold innovation: but the unfortunate bookseller ends up hauled before a court.

Yours faithfully,
T. A. MAHER,
(Chairman), Pentos plc,
9 Clifford Street, W1.
November 26.

Artistic impressions

From Mr Jason Loftis

Sir, Competition judges usually have a discretion not to award first prize or any prize at all if, in their opinion, no entry meets the requisite standard.

I venture to suggest that the Turner Prize this year (letters, November 26) was an instance where the exercise of such discretion would have met with public acclaim.

Yours faithfully,
JASON LOFTIS,
26A Berrymede Road, Chiswick, W4.

From Mr Paul Edelin de la Praudière

Sir, May I propose that Mr Gerald Ratner, on stepping down from his firm, should be offered a post as a judge for the Turner Prize for contemporary British art.

Yours sincerely,
P. L. EDELIN DE LA PRAUDIERE,
128 Palewell Park,
East Sheen, SW14.

Business letters, page 25

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 071-782 5046.

JORGE DONN

MAJOR WILLIAM TEMPLE

He is survived by his wife, three daughters and a son.

LIONEL SHREIR



PERSONAL COLUMN

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The franc and ERM face more pressure

Establishment man? William Rees-Mogg

Scotland choose Hastings as their captain

TELEVISION AND RADIO
Page 39

THE TIMES 2

THURSDAY DECEMBER 3 1992

BUSINESS TODAY

TAME TONE

BT will freeze the cost of direct-dialled calls for a year from January but rental charges will rise by 10p a week next year
Page 22

RATE REPLY

NatWest Bank has defended its treatment of small firms, saying base rate cuts were normally passed on
Page 23

FASTER FLOW



Yorkshire Water is surviving the recession better than most of its peers, lifting interim profits by 12 per cent
Pages 23 and 24

PEOPLE POWER



The balance of power has switched from company directors to shareholders, says Robert Bruce
Page 28

Weinstock sees signs of hope for economy

THE rate of job-shedding at the General Electric Company is slowing sharply, and Lord Weinstock, the managing director, says he can detect "glimmers" of recovery in the recession-ravaged economy.

He said: "One can't see green shoots or blue shoots or any particular colour of shoots, but there are a few tremors in this unyielding surface of recession."

His comments came as GEC unveiled a 12 per cent rise to £11.9 billion in its order book in the past six months, as well as plans to create a division using the company's legendary cash pile to lease railway rolling stock and other capital equipment.

The company hopes to take advantage of measures unveiled by Norman Lamont, the Chancellor, in his Autumn Statement to enable more private financing of infrastructure projects.

The improvement in the business outlook, described with typical caution by Lord Weinstock, may signal the approach of a long-awaited turning point in the economy. Although GEC's biggest businesses are in railway, power generation and telecommunications equipment, the diversification of its activities and markets gives its directors a clear view of what is happening in the economy.

Lord Weinstock said he had seen no cause for hope last spring, when many commentators believed the British economy was poised for recovery. "Now, the horizon is more hopeful," he said.

One cause for optimism was the recovery gathering pace in the American economy. GEC is an international business selling nearly two-thirds of its £8.5 billion a year output

■ An increase in GEC's order book and a slowdown in the rate of job cuts leads chairman Lord Weinstock to detect if not green shoots then just a glimmer of recovery

overseas. However, in his statement for the half year to the end of September, Lord Prior, GEC's chairman, said: "The devaluation of sterling and the recently announced improvements to ECGD cover and conditions will help in our drive to win vital overseas orders against international competition."

He added: "Recent reductions in interest rates and proposals for private financing of capital projects should provide an impetus for growth in some areas, and also create opportunities."

GEC has ridden out the recession better than most companies. In the first half, pre-tax profits rose 2.3 per cent to £356 million. But pressure for efficiency improvements has combined with technological advances to

result in massive job cuts. In the past two years, GEC has cut employee numbers worldwide by 23,000, but in the six months to September, numbers fell 4,500 to 143,500. In the second half, the number will be lower still.

Lord Weinstock said: "We don't think we are going to have to cut down much more. The rate of running down is running down, and I would hope it would stop."

With 40 per cent of GEC's business now in international joint ventures, its order book is already benefiting from rising infrastructure spending around the world. The creation of a leasing company to form a fourth leg is partly intended to capitalise on an expected upswing in Britain. GEC's American peer, General Electric, already has a substantial leasing operation. However, GEC is also securing important civil contracts at its defence business. GEC Marconi, and has developed a video telephone that will sell for £399, one-tenth the cost of those of its rivals.

GEC shares fell 9p to 263p as several City electrical analysts downgraded their full-year forecasts to about £840 million. Analysts had underestimated GEC's spending on research and development. The half-year dividend rose from 2.55p to 2.68p.

GEC's cash pile grew £265 million to £1.06 billion, and cash held in joint ventures rose £142 million to £733 million.



Weinstock: "more hopeful"

Comment, page 25



Bright outlook: Gerry Robinson, chief executive, was pleased with the progress made by all the group's divisions

Granada shoots to £130m

By MATTHEW BOND

SHARES in Granada Group jumped 8 pence to 334p after the television to motorway services group reported a 129 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £130 million. Alex Bernstein, chairman, described the performance as "excellent" and said it had been achieved "without any help at all from the economy".

Gerry Robinson, who joined as chief executive a year ago, said it was pleasing that all the group's businesses had reported higher profits. The final dividend rises 10 pence to 4.95p (4.5p) to make a total of 7.7p (7p).

The biggest improvement came from Granada's ITV subsidiary, which reported a 50 per cent increase in operating profits to £33 million. But that figure was enhanced by a £6 million reduction in the exchange rate, said Mr Robinson. From next year, as one of the successful ITV franchise bidders, Granada will be paying the government £9 million annually plus 11 per cent of its advertising revenue.

Mr Robinson said he expected total levy costs to be higher next year under the new system, while Mr Bernstein expressed great confidence in Granada's investment in British Sky Broadcasting, the satellite television venture in which News International, publisher of *The Times*, has a large stake.

There is no provision for a legal dispute with Customs and Excise over alleged non-payment of VAT on service insurance arrangements on rental products. More than £20 million is disputed.

Bass serves up improved profits

By COLIN CAMPBELL

BASS, the brewing, Holiday Inn and Coral racing group, is considering opportunities to expand its brewing interests overseas, Ian Prosser, chairman and chief executive, said after reporting higher 1992 year-end profits.

The group had fully complied with the earlier government order concerning pub disposals, and was now better able to concentrate on business growth and fresh opportunities, he said.

Bass reported pre-tax profits of £501 million for the year ended September compared with £430 million previously, and raised the year's total dividend from 17.8p to 18.9p a share. Profits were struck

after a £75 million (£55 million) exceptional charge to cover a fundamental restructuring of the business. No further related charges are anticipated, Bass said.

The Holiday Inn chain proved resilient with a 14 per cent improvement in dollar operating profits. During 1993, Bass expects to spend £200 million on the further development of the chain.

Bingo activities held up well in a difficult environment, but amusement machine manufacturing operations and racing interests suffered from the recession. Operating profit from the company's brewing business was 13.5 per cent higher at £210 million. Bass

announced a £496 million property write-down to reflect lower property values and a slimmed-down portfolio.

Mr Prosser said that Bass was experiencing tough trading conditions, although the government's determination to get the British economy on the move, and the prospect of a stronger American economy, should have positive implications for the current financial year.

Bass emphasised that any improvement was likely to come later rather than sooner, but said it was well placed to benefit from any general economic upturn.

Tempus, page 24

THE POUND

US dollar 1.5485 (+0.0230)
German mark 2.4335 (+0.0106)
Exchange index 79.5 (+0.8)
Bank of England official close (4pm)

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 share 297.8 (-8.7)
FT-SE 100 2794.1 (-27.9)
New York Dow Jones 3287.33 (-7.03)
Tokyo Nikkei Ave 17393.68 (+80.64)

INTEREST RATES

London: Bank Base 7%
3-month interbank 7.1-7.4%
3-month flexible bills 6.4-6.7%
US, Prime Rate 6%
Federal Funds 3%
3-month Treasury Bills 3.34-3.32%
30-year bonds 100-100 1/4

CURRENCIES

London: New York
£ \$1.5485
£ DM 3.303
£ Sfr 1.521
£ FF 16.360
£ Yen 161.90
£ Index 79.5
ECU 0.804113 SDR 0.911746
ECU 1.343606 SDR 1.086796
London Forex market close

COMMODITIES

London: New York
Al 5335 10 PM 5335.65
Coke 5335 00 5335.50
2217 30 217.80
New York: Corn 5 336 35 336.85

MARKET SENTIMENT

Bull (Dec) 116 40/bul (518.55)

RPE 139.9 October (1987-100)

* Denotes midday trading price

Electricity shops on trial

By MARTIN WALLER, DEPUTY CITY EDITOR

THE fate of 700 jobs at the retailing arm of London Electricity will be decided after the new year and will depend on how well the shops perform in Christmas trading.

London has been extensively revamping its retail interests, but admits that they are still being badly hurt by the recession. The company is now in the last of three years of restructuring. "The structure we have put in place has given us the flexibility and scope to make a clear decision about the future direction of this business," said John Wilson, the chairman. "That decision will be made by the end of the financial year."

The businesses lost about £4 million in the first half to end-September, roughly the same as the previous year despite heavy investment. The chances of finding a buyer, if necessary, for all the shops

would appear slim, given the amount of boarded-up space on Britain's high streets. Roger Urwin, the chief executive, commented: "Inevitably, at the end of the road closure is an option, but only one option."

The decision will not be taken until after Christmas and the result of trading would be a critical factor, he said. The business has 94 stores spread across and around the capital, of which 66 have been opened since privatisation in 1990. Of these, 48 are franchises within branches of Debenhams department stores.

London made pre-tax profits of £17.3 million, up from £14.5 million, in the six months to end-September. The interim dividend is raised from 5.0p to 5.6p. Its retail arm is the second subsidiary of one of the 12 privatised elec-

tricity distributors in England and Wales to come under a possible death sentence this week. On Tuesday, Norweb threatened to close its contracting arm, with the loss of 650 jobs. If agreement on cost and job cuts cannot be reached with the trade unions.

London's retail business is competing in the South East with a joint venture set up by three of its neighbours, Southern, Eastern and Midlands, which have clubbed together to take on the big electrical retailers. That venture has drawn criticism from the latter, principally Dixons, which has claimed unfair competition and alleged that the electricity companies are supporting their loss-making shops with profits from their lucrative core distribution business.

Tempus, page 24

HK exile is UK's top private firm

By ANGELA MACKAY

THE "yacht people" have arrived in the City. For the first time in a long while, Littlewoods has been pushed aside as Britain's biggest private company to be replaced by John Swire & Sons, the former Hong Kong transport group that owns Cathay Pacific.

Swire's move into the ascendancy from 26th place last year follows a restructuring that relocated most of its business from Hong Kong to London in the run-up to the colony reverting to Chinese rule in 1997. At £5.2 billion, the group's net tangible assets dwarf Littlewoods, which stand at £834 million.

According to a survey by Jordans, the research group, entitled *Britain's top privately owned companies 1992*, Swire is also the most profitable, reporting pre-tax profits of £430 million last year compared with Littlewoods' £97 million.

Jordans' annual survey of 2,000 private companies shows that the small family business has suffered the most in the recession which has helped average



pre-tax profits to decline by almost 14 per cent.

While hardly a small family business, Brel Group, the rolling stock manufacturer, experienced the most stunning reversal of fortune with pre-tax profits plummeting from £22.4 million to a loss of £41.3 million making Brel number one in the league table of those companies that showed the greatest decrease in profits.

Indeed, one in ten companies in last year's top 2,000 have either been taken over or run into financial difficulty while of the biggest 500 companies in this

year's survey, almost one in five showed a loss at post-tax level in their latest financial year.

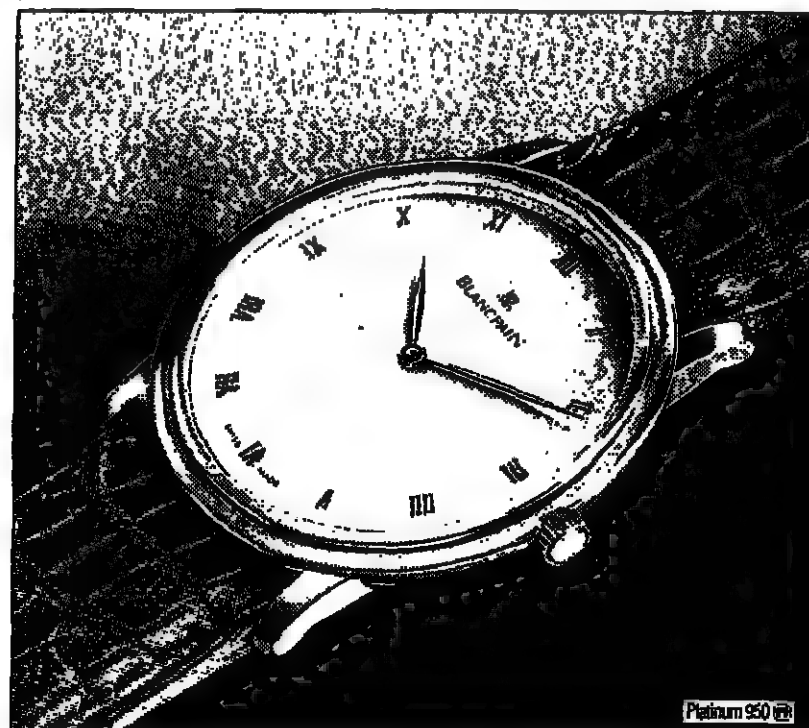
It is difficult to locate recession-proof industries from the survey. However, those engaged in the production of drilling fluids and musicals are doing well. The most profitable company based on return of assets is BW Mud, a supplier of drilling and completion fluids, which can boast profits eight times higher than its assets of £201,000.

Britain's two most successful impresarios, Cameron Macintosh and Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber, came tenth and twelfth in terms of profit margins.

Their companies, Cameron Macintosh Ltd and Really Useful Holdings, showed rapid growth and corresponding progress in profits.

Mr Macintosh, producer of the worldwide blockbusters *Cats* and *Les Miserables* saw his sales double to £22 million in two years and pre-tax profits rise by 50 per cent to £6.7 million. Sir Andrew actually came 24th in terms of pre-tax profits with £13 million in 1991.

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Fears over German support keep pressure on ERM

BY JANET BUSH
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

EUROPE'S currency system remained under severe pressure yesterday amid growing fears about the Bundesbank's continued willingness to spend billions of marks bailing out its weaker members.

The focus of currency speculators remained squarely on the franc, which opened near to its floor in the exchange-rate mechanism, and on the Danish crown, the weakest member of the system yesterday, trading almost at its lower limit.

The Bundesbank announced early in the day that it was intervening to support the franc, probably with the Bank of France. The central banks

■ The French franc recovered after the Bundesbank intervened but French interest rates still rose sharply, reflecting continued uncertainty in the market

of Denmark, Belgium and The Netherlands were also active in a combined effort to stabilise the system.

The verbal assault on the ERM by Helmut Schlesinger, president of the Bundesbank, on Monday remained at the heart of the turmoil in Europe's currency markets. His disapproval of the Bundesbank intervening on behalf of the system's weak currencies unleashed another wave of speculative selling.

However, the franc recovered from its lows after the Bundesbank confirmed its intervention. That could not prevent French interest rates from rising sharply, an indication of nervousness about how far the Bundesbank's commitment will go if currency turbulence and the need for huge intervention continues.

Dr Schlesinger's remarks this week are the result of a policy dilemma for the Bundesbank. The bank's high interest rate policy is being pursued partly in response to above-target growth in its money supply. But the Bundesbank's obligation to intervene in markets on behalf of its European partners is boosting its money supply even further. While Germany's domestic considerations are being compromised by its ERM duties, currency market stability is likely to be elusive.

There was evidence yesterday

that life outside the ERM is a good deal calmer. The UK Treasury released figures showing a surprising rise in Britain's underlying reserves of gold and foreign currency of \$86 million in contrast to forecasts that reserves would fall by about \$1.8 billion.

Richard Jeffrey, of Charterhouse Tilney, said the figures were evidence that there has been little need to intervene in support of the pound since it left the ERM in September. But he also said that, since September, it had become almost impossible to guess at the real reserves position.

At the close of trading yesterday, the franc stood at 3.4100 to the mark, little recovered from a low of 3.4150. The pound was little changed from Tuesday's close, at DM2.4290.

□ The European Commission said yesterday that the outlook for European economies was very bleak. Henning Christopherson, commissioner for economic affairs, said overall growth would only amount to 1.1 per cent this year and would be at the low end of a range between one and 1.5 per cent next year. He called for a Europe-wide shift towards spending on capital projects, stressing the commission's desire to see growth promoted.

Values gather, page 25

Reversal at Porter Chadburn

Shares in Porter Chadburn slipped from 26p to 19½p as losses on the sale of a subsidiary sent the notepaper-to-leisure products group crashing to a first-half loss.

Exceptional losses of £6.8 million on the disposal of Gola Footwear resulted in a pre-tax loss of £5.2 million in the six months to October 2, compared with a profit of £2.9 million last time.

There was a loss per share of 5.52p compared with earnings of 2.95p. Stripping out the exceptional costs, earnings slip to 1.26p (2.95p). The interim dividend is held at 0.85p a share.

Without the exceptional losses, the company would have made a reduced pre-tax profit of £1.8 million (£2.9 million). The exceptional losses include a provision for anticipated losses of £228,000 on the sale of surplus freehold properties, shown in accordance with the new guidelines on company accounting.

Packaging sales rose to £24 million, boosting divisional operating profits to £2.3 million (£1.4 million). Sales of consumer products excluding Gola rose to £31 million (£27.5 million), but operating profits collapsed from £2.3 million to £0.7 million. Operating profits from specialist distribution slipped to £379,000 (£576,000).

Neither consumer products nor specialist distribution have experienced any sign of an upturn. Levels of trading in some areas of the consumer products division have recently deteriorated further and the results for the year are expected to reflect this.

Express allocation

The public offer for shares in National Express, the long-distance coach operator, was oversubscribed. Applications totalling 14,723,200 shares were sent in for the 6,949,820 shares on offer. Those who applied for 250 shares were allocated in full. Bigger applications will be asked back on a gradually increasing scale. Those who applied for 500,000 or more will get 29 per cent of what they asked for. About 25 per cent of the issue was offered to the public and the rest was placed with institutions. Dealings in the shares, offered at 165p, are expected to begin on Thursday, December 10.

Losses trimmed

Harrison Industries, the industrial doors and power equipment company into which Antares Group was reversed early this year, trimmed its losses from £504,000 before tax to £455,000 in the six months to the end of September. Losses per share fell from 0.48p a share to 0.3p. There is again no dividend.

Galpin to retire at Standard Chartered

BY NEIL BENNETT, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

RODNEY Galpin is stepping down as chairman and chief executive of Standard Chartered, the international banking group, next June in a move to split the roles between two existing senior directors.

The next chairman will be Patrick Gillam, the current deputy chairman and former managing director of BP. Malcolm Williamson, Standard's managing director, is being promoted to chief executive starting in the new year.

Mr Galpin's unexpected decision to retire comes after four and a half years in the post. During that time he has steered Standard away from near-collapse, strengthened its balance sheet, reduced costs and radically improved its credit quality.

Mr Galpin, 62 next year, said he was taking the opportunity of the division of the two roles to retire. "When I joined the bank, people said it was called the most difficult job in British banking. I don't think it is now," he said. "With the appointment of a new chief executive I thought it was an

appropriate time to get out of his hair in the belief that I have changed the group and put it on a sure footing." Mr Galpin denied that his retirement had been forced on him by Standard's losses in the Bombay stock-market scandal, for which £100 million had been set aside. Standard is also strengthening its board by appointing David Moir, head of its Asia region, and David Brougham, head of all other regions, as directors.



Galpin: denial

M&G loses 11,000 unit trust account holders

BY OUR BANKING CORRESPONDENT

M&G Group, the fund manager, lost 11,000 unit trust clients in the past year, as the recession and uncertainty in world stock markets prompted investors to remove funds.

The firm maintained its pre-tax profits at £39.4 million in the year to end-September by launching its two largest investment trusts this year, which raised a total of £376 million. M&G's unit trust business was hit by net re-

demptions of £109 million during the year, compared with net investment of £123 million last time. The redemptions cut the unit trust accounts by 11,000 to 618,000.

M&G's unit trusts slipped 13 per cent in value to £4.14 billion, which contributed to a 5 per cent fall in the group's total funds to £8.59 billion. The group is still paying a final dividend of 11p, to bring the total to 20p, up 5 per cent.

BY SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

NatWest chief grilled on small firms

LORD Alexander of Woodon put up a strong defence yesterday of National Westminster Bank's treatment of small firms as he came under fire from MPs for exorbitant lending rates and extra charges.

The bank's chairman said branch managers tried to nurse companies through a deep, long-lasting recession as it was not in the bank's interests for firms to fail. Base rate reductions were passed on in full, automatically and immediately, to all customers borrowing at base rates.

But MPs on the Commons cross-party Treasury com-

mittee complained over increased margins for small firms in trouble, the 36.3 per cent interest rate charged on unauthorised loans, the excess borrowing charge of £50 a day, and demands by bank managers for struggling firms to pay for property or accountancy valuations before continuing loans.

John Watts, the Tory chairman, said the bank should rely on interest rates for its rewards rather than extra fees and charges, such as £50 a day. Lord Alexander told MPs that the bank, which lends £11 billion to its 1 million small business customers, had to

remember the interests of savers, borrowers, staff and shareholders and so price its services fairly to reflect the risks. Those risks increased during a recession. "It is not in our interests that businesses fail," he said. He added that there was no cross-subsidisation between the bank's sectors, denying that small firms faced harsher treatment because of losses suffered in other parts of NatWest.

"We price according to the risk." Under pressure from MPs he admitted that margins had been increased for some businesses, but said the average increase had

been 0.5 per cent. Quentin Davies, Conservative MP for Stamford and Spalding, said that 0.5 per cent could be a lot of money for a firm under pressure. Jane Bradford, head of small business services, said 65 per cent of customers had seen no change in margins at all during the recession and five per cent had seen a reduction. When asked why the banks were being criticised, Lord Alexander said: "We have no monopoly on wisdom. We do not always get it right. We are capable of improvement."

Complaints soar, page 4



Profits pouring in: Sir Gordon Jones, chairman, left, and Malcolm Batty, group finance director of Yorkshire Water, yesterday.

Yorkshire Water in heavy demand

BY GRAHAM SEARJEANT
FINANCIAL EDITOR

YORKSHIRE Water is surviving the recession better than most of its peers. Turnover rose 9.1 per cent to £239.5 million in the six months to end-September.

This included a 7.3 per cent increase at the utility business against a 7.1 per cent rise in prices. Malcolm Batty, the finance director, said lower usage by industrial customers had cost about £1 million but that new customers, including new residential connections, had added more.

The property market also remains alive in Yorkshire, enabling the group to sell some property in the first half and, it hopes, more jointly developed flats in the second. Work on a retail park on a disused site near Leeds should start next year with Evans of Leeds, the group's preferred development partner.

First-half pre-tax profits rose 12 per cent to £71.8 million. More than half the rise was due to a £4.4 million profit on the sale of the group's engineering design business to a joint venture with Babcock International. The interim dividend, normally a third of the year's total, rises 8.5 per cent to 7.05p from earnings up from 30.9p to 34.4p per share. Yorkshire had among the lowest water supply operating costs among privatised groups. In a survey issued this week by Ofwat, the financial regulator, Sir Gordon Jones, chairman, said the group was reaching the limits of normal cost-cutting. It is now looking at contracting out all non-core functions in the utility business and managing all water operations from a single control in Leeds by advancing a programme of remote electronic control and monitoring of all its sites.

Investment in the utility business grew to £138 million and should reach £300 million for the full year. Drinking water purification and sludge burning projects are ahead of target. Sir Gordon said customers might be better served if planned spending on sewage treatment and underground pipe replacement were phased over a longer period rather than being accelerated. The group faces an unplanned bill of more than £150 million for works in Hull as a result of European Community waste water directives issued since privatisation.

Temps, page 24

MSF makes U-turn by signing no-strike deal with Japanese

BY PHILIP BASSETT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

LEADERS of the MSF technical trade union — a fierce critic of both strike-free deals and Japanese working practices in the UK — have signed a no-strike agreement with a Japanese company.

The new plant, in Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, will create 400 jobs in a region hit hard by the recession and rising unemployment.

Toray Textiles Europe, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Japanese Toray Industries group, is setting up a £60 million textile plant that should employ 400 people by the end of 1994, and has the capacity to double its size.

Toray, which started manufacturing in Britain on two sites, in Bulwell, Nottinghamshire, and Hyde, Cheshire, in 1989, when it bought the Samuel Courtald division of Courtaulds, makes a number of garments for Marks and Spencer.

Manufacturing, Science

and Finance, one of three trade unions recognised at the company's two other plants, yesterday announced it had reached a single-union deal for the new factory.

The deal will specifically preclude strikes by means of pendulum arbitration — a strike substitute system under which an arbitrator decides in favour of either of the company's pay offer or the union's claim.

The left-wing MSF and its predecessor unions have for years attacked this sort of agreement when signed by such right-wing unions as the electricians' and engineers'. At last year's Trades Union Congress conference, the MSF launched a bitter attack on the "alien" work practices of Japanese companies operating in the UK.

Roger Lyons, MSF general secretary, who confirmed yesterday that the Toray deal was a no-strike agreement, dissociated himself from the "alien"

attack mounted by his predecessor, Ken Gill, and, referring to the date he took over in the job, said: "Day 1 of MSF was September 1, 1992. I'm not going to be held responsible for statements or comments made personally by my predecessor."

The deal marks what Mr Lyons said was a "watershed" for the MSF by taking the predominantly white-collar union into blue-collar representation. That may increase inter-union competition.

Paul Gallagher, general secretary of the AEEU engineering union, said: "I'm surprised but delighted that MSF has stopped seeing inward investment as alien."

MSF stressed that the Toray deal will allow full-time union officials to sit on the joint management-employee company council. The union said this feature differentiated the deal from others.

Christian Salvesen advances

BY COLIN CAMPBELL

CHRISTIAN Salvesen, the distribution, marketing and specialist hire group, is raising its interim dividend by 10.3 per cent to 3.2p after reporting interim pre-tax profits of £40.4 million (£36.1 million) for the period to end-September.

The group's non-core brick-making operations still managed to make profits in a difficult market, and Salvesen Brick now has a national market share of 8 per cent. The rental of air-conditioning and lighting to the temporary television stations covering the Barcelona Olympics served the group well in the half-year, generating profits of £1 million out of specialist hire profits of £15.4 million.

Net debt has been further reduced and gearing slipped from 27 per cent to 22.7 per cent. By year end, gearing should be under 20 per cent. Interim net earnings were 10.12p (9.01p).

For all those feather-brained individuals who think the only things that flock around the Lincolnshire Heartlands are starlings, here is the news.

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But don't take our word for it. Ask Mr and Mrs Scrupps. They've just moved into the area to work and already they've increased production by 100%. The fruit of their labours is called Baby Bill and he weighed in at a healthy 8lbs 10oz.

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communications are literally A1. In fact the Heartlands are a mere 100 miles from London.

Communications are literally A1. The famous, North-South trunkroute is just along the road, and is earmarked for upgrading. A well-connected rail system,

deals in everything from microwave technology to heavy plant engineering. So why have all these exponents of such far-flung fields chosen the far-flung fields of Lincolnshire as their base?

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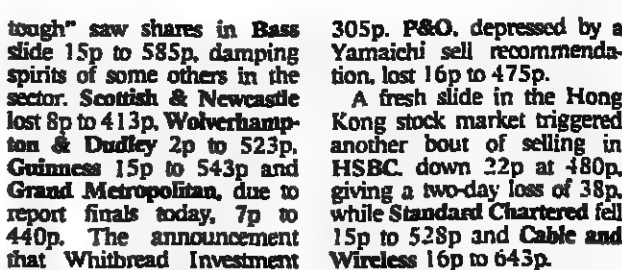
City turns attention to takeover rumours after bout of profit-taking

in 1993 should buy Bass now.



sign that this region is surviving recession better than most. Assuming no second-half surprises, the shares will yield about 5.6 per cent in dividend at 502p and sell at about eight times earnings. The shares are no longer

Granada jumped 25p to 334p as analysts upgraded profit estimates in response to a better than expected surge in full-year profits. In contrast,



noises from Nomura, the Japanese securities house, helped ICI add 14p to £10.27.

American interest also helped Sears climb 4p to 96p, on heavy volume of 8.7 million shares, while positive notes from brokers lent sup-

SHV, the private Dutch group that invests in fuel distribution companies, confirmed that it was behind the recent spurt of share-buying in Calor Group, down 4p at 220p. SHV lifted its stake in Calor from about 46 to 48.15

PHILIP PANGALOS

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Dec 2 midday	Dec 1 close	Dec 2 midday	Dec 1 close
57 1/2	52 1/2	Circle Kitchens	22 1/2 22 1/2

Charles Sturge, co-founder of Chaiset, said its figures were based on the worst available estimates by actuaries for losses from exposure to areas such as pollution and asbestos. In some cases they came from the syndicates' accounts.

Closing Prices Page 27

RIGHTS ISSUES

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COMMENT

War games for GEC and BAe

Little more than a year ago a financial crisis erupted at British Aerospace that culminated in talks with GEC over joint ventures and the possibility of Lord Weinstock's company taking a minority stake. Now British Aerospace is in the midst of a massive restructuring and GEC is in rude health. Not a bad time for Lord Weinstock to think about reopening talks with John Cahill, the new chairman of British Aerospace, especially in areas where an alliance could help save the British taxpayer's money.

Defence analysts point out that the Ministry of Defence has no experience in managing huge defence contracts itself. Someone has to integrate what the defence industry calls the weapons platform, the ship or plane which delivers the missile, the missile itself, and the delicate electronics which control the missile. At the moment GEC and BAe do the job for the government but it seems that competition between just two contractors, who may well be awarded the work on a you this time, him next time basis, does not drive down prices. Surely a combination of such thrifty managers as Lord Weinstock and Mr Cahill, after all his years at the BTR school of cash management, could do better.

Some in the City think Lord Weinstock may well be tempted to make another approach to BAe. Before the nationalisation of the aerospace industry, now privatised as BAe, GEC owned half of the British Aircraft Corporation. In 1984 Lord Weinstock wanted to take over BAe but was rebuffed. He has apparently regretted it ever since. But how would Mr Cahill react if approached? He has just spent £1 billion on capping losses in BAe's regional aircraft business to focus the group on defence. Add in some long-awaited good news on the Al Yamamah contract, now that Saudi finances are in better shape, and Mr Cahill may be reluctant to play at the moment. Lord Weinstock is a patient man though and may be reluctant to give up on his grand vision of a great British aerospace and defence grouping.

BT uncertainty

Provided the government does not try to be too clever with BT3, as the planned sale of a third tranche of stock in our biggest telecoms company has been dubbed, the offering should go well. It will not need, and may suffer from, elaborate bells and whistles aimed at promoting so-called wider share ownership. These usually miss the whole point of share ownership and encourage punters to regard buying shares as an alternative to a flutter on the 3.30 at Kempton Park.

Yesterday's price cuts to phone customers were coupled with a reminder from the industry regulator that further reductions will be needed in order for BT to meet its RPI minus 7½ per cent formula. That may raise fears that BT will have to suffer in order to meet what is the toughest price cap imposed on a leading European telecoms company. But BT's severe redundancy programme and large scale disposals have set a trend to far lower costs. Annual staff costs in 1997 are estimated to be £1 billion below those of this year.

What is needed badly, though the long term investing institutions have been painfully slow to push for it, is a statement from the government setting the limits to the positive discrimination against BT aimed at taking away its market share in order to promote wider competition. The BT3 prospectus should set out the lower limits of segmental market share at which the positive discrimination will stop and free competition will resume. Having established the principle for BT, the government might then be persuaded to do the decent thing and repeat the process for British Gas, whose shareholders are similarly in need of regulatory transparency.

Wolfgang Münchau
says speculators may
lose the battle against
the franc as they
misjudge the
Bundesbank

The hull in Europe's foreign exchange markets was brief and ended a few days ago. The news that the Bundesbank and the Banque de France were again intervening in support of the franc shows that the speculators are back in business. They have entered what amounts to the third round in the battle over the exchange-rate mechanism this year. It may not be the last, but if it is and if the speculators win this time, the future of the ERM is in doubt.

Yesterday, it appeared the central banks had retained the upper hand. But what is far more interesting is why a speculator, having lost the battle over the franc in September, would want to return to fight what is essentially the same battle? One would have assumed that even high-risk speculators would have learnt their lesson and stayed away.

The reason for the speculation is a perception that something fundamental has changed since Black Wednesday. This has little to do with the much-quoted political uncertainty in Europe, or even with French obstructiveness in the world trade talks, nor is it related to the likelihood of a French recession. What has changed, from the market's point of view, is the position of Germany and the Bundesbank, where there appears to be growing frustration about the way in which the ERM operates. If the Bundesbank is thought to be no longer prepared to defend the ERM with the same determination as before, then the mechanism itself comes under fire. And this means scope for speculation profits.

While this sounds plausible, supporting evidence is, at best, sketchy.

The market's behaviour appears to have become progressively irrational from battle to battle, at least on purely fundamental economic grounds. The most rational exchange-rate bet was the first, ahead of Black Wednesday, when the market (and the Bundesbank) took the view that the parities of sterling and the lira were unsustainable, and out of line with economic reality. The trade deficits during a recession were one sign. The growing divergence of purchasing power parities (PPPs) from the real exchange rates was another. PPPs are exchange rates adjusted for a chosen measure of inflation, usually traded goods, and they constitute a frequently used method of assessing whether an exchange rate is at a "correct" level or at least whether it is sustainable.

The subsequent bout of speculation against the franc was less rational, since the PPPs suggested that the franc was properly valued. France



Looking for a sure bet: currency markets have become more irrational in the search for profits

has a lower rate of inflation than Germany and a lower public sector deficit. If one believed purely in the significance of PPPs then there is no fundamental economic reason to suspect a devaluation of the franc. On the contrary, if the PPP theorem was correct, one would have placed a bet on an appreciation of the franc.

But a speculator could still have been regarded as rational, because the system itself looked vulnerable after the exit of sterling and the lira, and it seems worth a try to bet on the ERM's very survival. It also appeared at the time that the markets could win any battle against the central banks. In the case of the French franc, the markets were wrong and they lost.

So why would the same speculators come back now? Once again, the key to their behaviour can be found in a series of comments made by the president of Bundesbank and his intellectual entourage. On their own, none of these comments amounts to much. But taken together, they paint a picture of a malcontent Bundesbank, a state within a state, unhappy with the ERM, unhappy with German inflation, monetary growth, and with the German government.

This week, Helmut Schlesinger let it be publicly known that he had reservations about certain aspects of the ERM's operations, especially the intervention mechanism. After 13

years of mainly successful operation, the issue over intervention has suddenly gained prominence, after the Bundesbank spent about 100 billion marks in support operations for other currencies. In practice, this presents less of a problem than the sheer size of the figure suggests, but massive intervention in a short period of time has led to an indirect rise in the money supply.

In a speech to economists and students at the University of Cologne, Dr Schlesinger said "unlimited obligatory intervention" constituted a "powerful incentive for speculation". For good measure he cited the case of George Soros, the American investor who claims to have made a \$950 million profit on Black Wednesday.

There are two reasons behind Dr Schlesinger's scepticism. First, the Bundesbank is opposed to intervention if it believes that a particular parity is indefensible. It is a case of the Bundesbank refusing literally to pour good money after bad.

Second, and far more seriously, the Bundesbank is afraid of blackmail. In theory, intervention should be a weak currency could be unlimited if governments refuse to agree to realignments. The rules stipulate that any money borrowed from the Bundesbank to prop up a weak currency would have to be repaid within about three months,

but in the very short term there is no theoretical limit to the amount of intervention. In theory, the others could conspire and let the Bundesbank bleed to death.

It has recently become known that when the ERM was set up in 1979, the then-president of the Bundesbank, Oskar Emminger, obtained a guarantee from Helmut Schmidt, the former German Chancellor, that the Bundesbank would not have to intervene ad infinitum in defence of a weak currency.

But this guarantee was given on the assumption that such a situation would never arise because a realignment would occur before intervention got out of control. But the events in September have shown that this is not necessarily the case. Germany wants a proper realignment, and even made an attempt to such effect to Jean-Claude Trichet, head of the EC monetary committee. For reasons about which there has a good deal of speculation, he did not call a meeting to discuss this request.

Dr Schlesinger has not put forward his own view on how the intervention mechanism should be reformed. Perhaps this could involve the imposition of a limit on obligatory intervention, so that a realignment could be effectively forced even on reluctant governments. The main problem is that this does not deal with the problem of speculation. Indeed, there

may even be more speculation, if the markets believe that an intervention "threshold" has been reached.

From recent experience, the Bundesbank appears to take the view that the ERM has considerable weaknesses, although Dr Schlesinger's Cologne speech also put his criticism into perspective, when he argued against a fundamental reform of the ERM.

Foreign exchange markets regard the Bundesbank's present unease as a sign of weakness, which may be financially exploitable. With the onslaught on the franc, speculators may just want to test how far the Bundesbank can be pushed. But the stakes are high.

The Bundesbank may not want to be held responsible for what could turn out to be the demise of the ERM. Black Wednesday has shown that the Bundesbank can be rather unenthusiastic in its support of what it regards as unsustainable. Yet, when the Bundesbank regards an exchange rate as defensible, as in the case of the franc, it is prepared to mount large-scale support operations.

It is perfectly true that the turbulence in the ERM raises a number of questions about the future of monetary co-operation in Europe. Others may criticise the Bundesbank's policy of high interest rates, without which the recent tension may never have arisen in the first place.

Even if the Bundesbank's wish to limit the intervention mechanism was heeded, German economic policy, which is the real cause for many of Europe's present economic difficulties, will be no different. The Bundesbank will always put Germany "first, last and always" — its responsibility under German law.

But it would be hazardous to speculate that Germany and the Bundesbank are going to let go of the ERM. Too much political credibility has been staked on the ERM as a system of exchange-rate management and as a precursor to full monetary union, to which the German government and the Bundesbank remain committed. The franc is not as widely traded as sterling, and is defensible as long as the perceived fundamentals are in place. The Bundesbank places great emphasis on the importance of purchasing power parities.

PPPs do not constitute the ultimate answer to the question of what constitutes a correct rate of exchange. But a devaluation of the franc would be difficult to justify.

Indeed there is some speculation that the French authorities may mount a forward defence of the franc by moving into an even narrower ERM band than the present 2.25 per cent fluctuation. This would cement the hard core of the ERM, with Germany, France and the Benelux countries at the centre.

Speculators should also beware that there is one thing that Dr Schlesinger dislikes even more than unlimited intervention: a speculator who makes a profit of \$950 million in one day.

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

All dressed up and nowhere...

WHAT a relief! Those who feared they had been relegated to the "B" list or passed over altogether for the grand gathering usually held by Sears each year at Claridges can sleep knowing they have not been socially snubbed. Each January, Sears holds a cocktail party in the hotel's ballroom for 300 of the great and good but has cancelled the occasion this time round because of the recession. Many a discreet enquiry has apparently been made from those who regularly attend and Geoffrey Maitland Smith, chairman, confesses the situation has required infinite delicacy. A letter of cancellation would have been embarrassing, but problems were also posed by Maitland Smith's idea of conveying the message by sending out early invitations for the party at Invitations for 1994. "The ready dawned on me that 90 per cent of people would not read the invitations properly and would turn up in January 1993," he says. So far, he has relied on telling people personally. Now others can also rest at ease.

Charity first

SEARS is not the only firm doing things differently this Christmas. City solicitor Richards Butler has decided to cut back on the canapés and serve only wine at tonight's drinks party for 200 banking clients. But the solicitor is not just saving pennies. Instead, it is donating the £10 per head it would have spent on

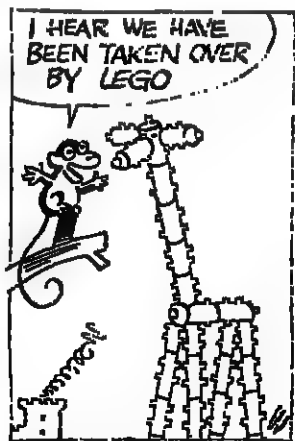
asparagus and smoked salmon. The money is going to the Save the Children fund and partner Colin Bamford says clients have warmed to the idea — several who cannot attend have sent donations.

Fettered by lease

LAURENCE Shurman, the banking ombudsman, is finding out how intransigent landlords can be. When his office was set up in 1985 the far-sighted banks who fund him signed a lease into the next century with no breaks. Now, thanks to a record number of complaints about high street banks, Shurman's staff has increased from the initial two to 35. New premises are urgently needed and are being sought, says Dame Mary Donaldson, the chairman of the office. The new offices are likely to be substantially cheaper than the offices the ombudsman currently occupies in Fetter Lane, in the City, and will leave him trying to find a tenant at a like-ly loss. The ombudsman is determined not to work from two centres, says Dame Mary.

Checking them out

RECEIVERSHIPS in the hotel market are providing endless opportunities for budding hotel entrepreneurs. Guy Macpherson, who ran the Gleneagles Hotel for two years after British Rail sold it, is being backed by the Blandy group, which is based in Madeira, to create a UK group of luxury hotels. In the last two years he has found there is more mileage in rescuing hotels from the clutches of the receivers. Mazard, the



consultancy he is running for Blandy, currently operates eight hotels for the likes of Lloyds Bank and Ernst & Young. Macpherson looks after them alongside award-winning hotels such as Blandy's Charingworth Manor in the Cotswolds. "We immediately remove the stigma of a hotel being run by the receivers," he maintains. There is, doubtless, a certain cachet in Macpherson's association. He joined Trusthouse Forte as a waiter in the Waldorf and ended up running 18 Forte hotels and as number two in its international division. Blandy's is good for a name or two as well. Its Madeira flagship is Reids, world famous for the tropical gardens that inspired Winston Churchill to paint.

Tarrying no more

CHANGE is in the air at Barclays de Zoete Wedd where Brian Tarell is retiring as head of United Kingdom market-making after a square of a century in the Square

de Zoete Wedd. Tarell, 52, stepped into the breach after Peter Holloway's departure four years ago and has won the respect of his City peers for his work at BZW — not that he would admit it, of course. "The firm has been very good to me, but I am getting a bit too old for all the changes," says Tarell, who joined the old stock exchange floor in 1964 and had a spell as Sir Nicholas Goodison's blue button before switching to life as a jobber. He began working on the oil patch with R.A. Blackwell, the lobbying firm bought by Wedd Durlacher in 1973, and was swept along in the BZW empire in the run-up to Big Bang. He hands over to his deputy, John David-Jones.

Blessed Blaise

AFTER another year talking themselves hoarse in the service of Britain's hard-hit oil company, the BP press office has wisely chosen the medieval crypt of St Etheldreda's Church in Ely Place near Holborn as the venue for its Christmas party. The church is best known for the throat-blessing ceremony which takes place on the feast of St Blaise each year on February 3, attracting those with sore vocal chords from around the world. Relief for parched throats will undoubtedly feature at the BP party — also with the church's blessing. "Eating and drinking are both very Christian activities," says Father Kit Cunningham, who has been invited to attend. Amen to that, says City Diary.

DEBRA ISAAC

A case of Access and patience

From the Earl of Lauderdale
Sir, Reports that Access accounts addressed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer have gone unpaid cause me to disclose an Access error in the opposite direction.

I hold a signed receipt for payment to Access Ltd. via the Royal Bank of Scotland, Brompton Road, SW3, branch, of the sum of £530.06p on August 12 last for settlement of my then current account.

More than 11 weeks later, Access have still not credited this amount to my account and continue to clock up interest against it. It is now two calendar months since I drew the attention of the Royal Bank of Scotland to this matter and I am once again being invited to be patient. Yours faithfully, LAUDERDALE, House of Lords, SW1.

When Parcel Force was far too quick

From Mr Davis Morris
Sir, The misfortunes suffered by small businesses extend beyond the banks to other somewhat necessary services. As director of a business depending much on mail order in this pre-Christmas period, we are now informed Parcel Force is applying an immediate increase in charges. It is too late to adjust price

lists and we must just accept the loss in revenue. Surely, Parcel Force should give adequate notice to small as well as large mail order firms — and why could they not delay their increases until January 1? Yours faithfully, DAVIS MORRIS, 1 Prior Avenue, Richmond, North Yorkshire.

Giving Safeway's French turkeys the bird

From Mr W. G. Cover
Sir, Your Deputy City Editor writes (November 25) under the heading "Argyle offers cheer with turkey glut and profits rise" that Safeway will be importing cheap French turkeys for Christmas. This seems very unnecessary when our own farmers are struggling to make ends meet and apart from the effect on the balance of payments we all prefer home bred birds. To add fuel to fire we read on page 1 "French to intercept UK farm lorries" and we already know the attitude of French farmers to importing UK lambs. The article states "Militant French peasants have declared war on British lorries entering France carry-

ing farm products". Why should we import from France produce that we can provide in this country when the French adopt an anti-British attitude? Surely Safeway should support British farmers; I shall not purchase a turkey at Safeway this Christmas. Although up to the present I have shopped at Safeways there are many other supermarkets where I can buy my groceries and Christmas fare. David Webster (Safeway) it is up to you to fill your shelves with UK products; you are one of many who is in a position to help the UK out of recession. Yours faithfully, W. G. COVER, Upper Foxhall, Upton Bishop, Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire.

NHL and a rise in directors' salaries

From Mr Tom Sales
Sir, As a shareholder in the company, I was interested to read your headline on November 21 "National Home Loans dives to £146m loss" and your statement that "its shares and preference shares are virtually worthless". This is a far cry from the heady days of Thatcher and Lawson in the late 1980s. The accounts for 1988 showed that directors' emoluments and fees rose from £378,000 to £726,000 — an increase of 92 per cent from the previous year.

I wrote to the then chairman, Mr J O R Darby, and the chief executive replied at length with the usual flannel that the directors did not decide on their own remuneration; this was done by the remuneration committee comprising non-executive directors. Yours faithfully, TOM SALES, 6 Temple Fortune Lane, NW11.

Letters to The Times Business and Finance section can be sent by fax on 071-782 5112.

The CO-OPERATIVE BANK

Managed Overdraft Rate Change

With effect from Tuesday, 1st December 1992

The Co-operative Bank Managed Overdraft Rates

for small businesses will be as follows:

	% per month
Premium Rate	0.84
Standard Rate	0.92

CO-OPERATIVE BANK PLC, PART OF THE BRITISH CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT.

1 Bank Street, Manchester, M60 4EP. Tel 061-832 5156.

[illegible][illegible][illegible]

Argentina	224.15	2.20	2.70	2.70	-60-ACC	240.85	2.50	2.80	2.80	2.80
Australia	104.08	11.87	2.72	2.63	-60-ACC	104.08	11.87	2.72	2.63	2.63
Canada	104.08	11.87	2.72	2.63	-60-ACC	104.08	11.87	2.72	2.63	2.63
U.S. Enterprise	175.24	2.89	0.03	3.94	-60-ACC	175.24	2.89	0.03	3.94	3.94
U.S. Non-Enterprise	175.24	2.89	0.03	3.94	-60-ACC	175.24	2.89	0.03	3.94	3.94
European G-7	54.00	58.33	0.43	1.49	-60-ACC	54.00	58.33	0.43	1.49	1.49
European G-10	54.00	58.33	0.43	1.49	-60-ACC	54.00	58.33	0.43	1.49	1.49
Latin America	48.35	11.74	0.57	0.43	-60-ACC	48.35	11.74	0.57	0.43	0.43
Asia Pacific	48.35	11.74	0.57	0.43	-60-ACC	48.35	11.74	0.57	0.43	0.43
East European G-7	58.38	20.91	1.18	1.07	-60-ACC	58.38	20.91	1.18	1.07	1.07
East European G-10	58.38	20.91	1.18	1.07	-60-ACC	58.38	20.91	1.18	1.07	1.07
Frontier Markets	48.35	11.74	0.57	0.43	-60-ACC	48.35	11.74	0.57	0.43	0.43
Frontier Markets G-7	48.35	11.74	0.57	0.43	-60-ACC	48.35	11.74	0.57	0.43	0.43
Frontier Markets G-10	48.35	11.74	0.57	0.43	-60-ACC	48.35	11.74	0.57	0.43	0.43
China	96.36	20.94	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	96.36	20.94	0.26	0.36	0.36
China G-7	96.36	20.94	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	96.36	20.94	0.26	0.36	0.36
China G-10	96.36	20.94	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	96.36	20.94	0.26	0.36	0.36
Japan	205.05	20.94	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	205.05	20.94	0.26	0.36	0.36
Japan G-7	205.05	20.94	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	205.05	20.94	0.26	0.36	0.36
Japan G-10	205.05	20.94	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	205.05	20.94	0.26	0.36	0.36
U.S. Enterprise	67.43	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	67.43	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
U.S. Non-Enterprise	67.43	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	67.43	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Asia Pacific	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Asia Pacific G-7	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Asia Pacific G-10	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Europe G-7	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Europe G-10	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Frontier Markets	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Frontier Markets G-7	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Frontier Markets G-10	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
China	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
China G-7	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
China G-10	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Japan	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Japan G-7	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Japan G-10	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
U.S. Enterprise	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
U.S. Non-Enterprise	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Asia Pacific	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Asia Pacific G-7	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Asia Pacific G-10	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Europe G-7	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Europe G-10	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Frontier Markets	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Frontier Markets G-7	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Frontier Markets G-10	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
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China G-7	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
China G-10	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Japan	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Japan G-7	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Japan G-10	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
U.S. Enterprise	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
U.S. Non-Enterprise	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Asia Pacific	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Asia Pacific G-7	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Asia Pacific G-10	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Europe G-7	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Europe G-10	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
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China	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
China G-7	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
China G-10	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Japan	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Japan G-7	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
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Asia Pacific G-7	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Asia Pacific G-10	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
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Europe G-10	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
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Frontier Markets G-10	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
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China G-7	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
China G-10	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Japan	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Japan G-7	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Japan G-10	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
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Asia Pacific G-10	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
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Europe G-10	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Frontier Markets	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Frontier Markets G-7	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Frontier Markets G-10	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
China	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
China G-7	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
China G-10	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Japan	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Japan G-7	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Japan G-10	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
U.S. Enterprise	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
U.S. Non-Enterprise	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Asia Pacific	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Asia Pacific G-7	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Asia Pacific G-10	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Europe G-7	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Europe G-10	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Frontier Markets	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Frontier Markets G-7	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Frontier Markets G-10	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
China	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
China G-7	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
China G-10	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	0.36
Japan	302.19	30.39	0.26	0.36	-60-ACC	302.19	30.39	0		

[illegible][illegible][illegible]

STANDARD LIFE TRUST MANAGEMENT LTD General Insurance 6880 366 777		S&P 2000		Source: Finance yield expressed as CAR (Compound Annual Return); 12 dividends 1 month prior. ** No significant data.	
1987	42.67	43.58	-0.50	1.87	
1988	53.86	57.23	-0.30	1.05	

STOCK MARKETS

Exchange index compared with 1985 was up at 79.5
(day's range 79.1-79.6).

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES				
Mk Rates for Dec 2	Range	Close	1 month	3 month
Air Assets	2.7264-2.7418	2.7308-2.7350		

Buenos Aires	1978-30.50	49.95-50.00	7-10ds	15-24ds
Buenos Aires	1978-30.50	49.95-50.00	7-10ds	15-24ds
Brussels	0.9200-0.9210	0.9200-0.9239	171-110ds	264-637ds
Frankfurt	2.4330-2.4420	2.4287-2.4319		1-11ds
London	2.1170-2.1175	2.1175-2.1180	365-140ds	1-11ds
Madrid	17.175-17.177	17.578-17.633	120-140ds	345-380ds
Mexico	21.117-21.850			
Montreal	1.9706-1.9850	1.9797-1.9891	0.20-0.25ds	0.25-0.29ds
New York	0.9200-0.9210	0.9200-0.9239	171-110ds	264-637ds
Paris	0.9200-0.9210	0.9200-0.9239	171-110ds	264-637ds
Paris	2.2290-2.2320	2.2290-2.2320	3-11ds	7-91ds
San Francisco	2.1170-2.1175	2.1175-2.1180	365-140ds	1-11ds
Tokyo	191.07-192.25	191.79-193.00	1-11ds	10-14ds
Vienna	2.1808-2.1819	2.1808-2.1819	3-11ds	7-91ds
Source: Exel			Premium - 3d	Discount - 7d

Argentina pearl	1,530.3-1,529.1	Australia	1,652.1-1,662.1
Australia dollar	2,265.9-2,262.1	Austria	11,096-11,111
Bahamas dollar	1,338.3-1,338.3	Brazil (Conti)	1,264.3-1,264.3
Brazil cruzeiro	150.74-2,568.6	Canada	1,264.3-1,264.3
Bulgarian lev	1,338.3-1,338.3	Chad franc	1,264.3-1,264.3
Philippine peso	7,757.5-7,837.5	France	1,264.3-1,264.3
Czechoslovakian	115.93-93.48	Germany	1,264.3-1,264.3
Hong Kong dollar	11,096-11,111	Italy	1,264.3-1,264.3
India rupee	1,338.3-1,338.3	Japan	1,264.3-1,264.3
Kenyan K.S.	1,338.3-1,338.3	Malaysia	1,264.3-1,264.3
Malaysian ringgit	3,020.2-3,020.2	Netherlands	1,264.3-1,264.3
Mexican peso	1,338.3-1,338.3	New Zealand	1,264.3-1,264.3
New Zealand dollar	1,700.0-1,700.0	Saudi Arabia riyal	1,264.3-1,264.3
Sierra Leone leone	1,338.3-1,338.3	Singapore dollar	1,264.3-1,264.3
Saudi Arabia riyal	5,711.5-5,798.5	South Africa rand	1,264.3-1,264.3
Singapore dollar	1,338.3-1,338.3	Switzerland	1,264.3-1,264.3
South Africa rand	7,490.9-7,590.9	Taiwan dollar	1,264.3-1,264.3
Sri Lanka rupee	1,338.3-1,338.3	Thailand baht	1,264.3-1,264.3
Taiwan dollar	1,338.3-1,338.3	United States dollar	1,264.3-1,264.3
Thailand baht	1,338.3-1,338.3	West German mark	1,264.3-1,264.3
United States dollar	1,338.3-1,338.3	Yemen rial	1,264.3-1,264.3
West German mark	1,338.3-1,338.3		
Yemen rial	1,338.3-1,338.3		

Barrels Bank GTS x Liters Bank

MONEY RATES (%)					
Base Rates (Clearing Banks 7 Finance Hse 9)					
Discount Market Loans: 6 1/2 high 6 1/4 low 5 1/2 week fixed 5					
Treasury Bills (Discount: 2 mth 5/8, 3 mth 5/8, 6 mth 5/8, sell. 2 mth 5/8, 3 mth 5/8)					
Prime Bank Bills (Dist)	1 mth	2 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
Sterling Money Rates	6 1/4-6 1/2	6 1/4-6 1/2	6 1/4-6 1/2	6 1/4-6 1/2	6 1/4-6 1/2
Intermarket:	7 1/4-7 1/2	7 1/4-7 1/2	7 1/4-7 1/2	7 1/4-7 1/2	6 1/4-6 1/2
Overnight: open 6 1/4, close 8					
Local Authority Debts					
Sterling CDs	7 1/4-7 1/2	7 1/4-7 1/2	7 1/4-7 1/2	7 1/4-7 1/2	6 1/4-6 1/2
Dollar CDs	4.02-3.97	6 1/4	3.73-3.68	3.70-3.71	4.14-4.00
Floating Rate CDs:	7 1/4-7 1/2	7 1/4-7 1/2	7 1/4-7 1/2	7 1/4-7 1/2	7 1/4-7 1/2
ECB/ED: Fixed Rate Sterling Offered Finance, Make-up date: Mar. 10, 1982 (Agreed rates)					

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)					
Currency	7 day	1 mth	3 mth	6 mth	Call
Dollar	3-1/2	3-3/4	3 3/8-3/4	3 3/8-3/4	3 3/8-3/4
Switzerland	4-1/2	4-3/4	4 1/2-5	4 1/2-5	4 1/2-5
French Franc	11-10	12-10 1/2	11-11 1/2	11-11 1/2	10-8
Italian Franc	6-6 1/2	7-6 1/2	6-6 1/2	6-6 1/2	6-5 1/2
Yen	3-3 1/2	3-3 1/2	3-3 1/2	3-3 1/2	3-2 1/2

GOLD AND PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)			
Bullion: Open	\$335.00-335.40	Close	\$326.00-326.50
Low	\$334.20-334.70	Knightsbridge	\$355.00-357.00 (\$216.50-217.75)
Sovereigns:	Old \$78.50-82.50 (\$24.75-25.25)	New \$78.50-82.50 (\$24.75-25.25)	

Platinum: \$363.75 (€235.05) Silver: \$3.76 (€2.425) Palladium: \$97.50 (€63.00)



THEATRE page 30
Kate Hardie plays a
troubled honeymooner
in the period melodrama
The Ghost Train

ARTS

POETRY page 31

Stevie Smith: a short
poem by her is
published here today for
the first time



CINEMA: Geoff Brown reviews *Death Becomes Her* and (below, left) charts the career of its star, Meryl Streep

Multiples of Meryl

1949: Born Mary Louise Streep in Summit, New Jersey. Dramatic training at Vassar College, Dartmouth, and the Yale School of Drama. Her teacher, Group Theatre and ActorStudio veteran Robert Lewis, calls with awe: "She could play anything from a mewling babe to an octogenarian."

1977: After theatre work, mostly off-Broadway, hits the silver screen in *Julia*, down the cast list, the year later, an Oscar nomination (the first of nine) for *The Deer Hunter*, then a Best actress Oscar for *Kramer vs. Kramer*.



1978: first Oscar

1981: The accents begin. In *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, swathed in a cloak, struggles hard to be British. Next year, in *Sophie's Choice*, becomes Polish, flourishing her English with such precision that she wins another Oscar. Mannerisms dominate *Still of the Night*.

1983: Cuts hair, cews gum, drops alibis as the blue-collar activist heroine of *Silkwood*. Reclimbs the social ladder for the romance *Fallin' in Love*. 1985: Acquires scintillatingly modulated Danish accent to play Karen Blixen in *Out of Africa*. Another, better British



1981: first accent

accent for the film of David Hare's *Plenty*.

1987: Gets a coat of crime for her alcoholic big lady in *Ironweed*. Few people see this. Next year, bounces back with cropped black hair and an Australian accent as a supposed baby killer in *A City in the Dark*.

1989: Celebrate turning 40 with the terrible *he-Devil*. 1990: Finds success again in the brittle comedy *Postcards from the Edge*. Concludes film with a song.

1991: More brittle comedy in *Death Becomes Her*, with more singing, too.



1990: first song

Special effects swamp the story



Relishing an unconventional role: Meryl Streep, an anatomically challenged "bitch in velvet" in Martin Donovan and David Koepp's "frustratingly imperfect black comedy" *Death Becomes Her*

In the immortal words of scriptwriter David Koepp, "We always wondered how *Night of the Living Dead* would have turned out if Noel Coward had written it." Not many people can have shared such thoughts on George A. Romero's low-budget zombie classic; and Koepp's script for *Death Becomes Her*, written with the director of *Apartment Zero*, Martin Donovan, bears ample testament to a weird imagination at work.

Two rival Beverly Hills ladies, bitches in velvet, fight desperately to ward off the ravages of time. One (Meryl Streep) is an acid-tongued peacock, faced with a plummeting show business career. The other (Goldie Hawn) is a shy book editor whose husband-to-be, plastic surgeon Bruce Willis, has been scooped up by Streep. Grief and the special-effects wizards turn Hawn into a hideously bloated nervous wreck; but pounds and years drop off once she sips a magic potion which provides eternal youth, dispensed by Isabella Rossellini's beautician from a Gothic mansion that Dracula might envy. When Streep, seething, also takes the potion, outrageous fortune's slings and arrows thunder down.

This frustratingly imperfect black comedy about human vanity is directed by Robert Zemeckis, last encountered in 1990 rounding off his hugely successful *Back to the Future* trilogy. His new production is much less of a crowd-pleaser: the mood is too off-beat, the temperature too cold, while the desperate plights of these Beverly Hills haridans can hardly strike home with the bulk of today's movie audi-

ences, decades away from their first grey hair.

Yet, like any major Hollywood venture, *Death Becomes Her* must make some appeal to the marketplace. "You have no talent for poverty," Hawn tells the downtrodden Willis, contemplating divorce from his insufferable wife. Neither has Zemeckis. He gives the film a grandiose, glossy surface, and lets his special effects team run up the most fabulous bills.

At first the technical stunts are neatly spaced out. First, Hawn becomes a ballooning slob. A while later, Streep is pushed downstairs and emerges with her neck twisted 180 degrees. Then, once Hawn acquires a see-through bullet-hole punched through her stomach, matters get out of hand. Opulent display takes over, and any corsete satire lurking in the script (let alone wit worthy of Noel Coward) is swamped. Must all Hollywood "fun" movies nowadays end with bloated, frenzied, interminable finales? It seems so.

Hawn and, particularly, Streep relish their unconventional roles; Streep even gets to sing and shake a leg in a deliberately dreadful musical version of *Sweet Bird of Youth*. Rossellini, naked from the waist up, bar elaborate jewellery, purrs with mystery, while Willis, far less obnoxious than usual, lets himself be upstaged as the hapless plastic surgeon who is not beyond spray-painting his clients. There are sharp comic moments in this bizarre, somewhat cruel, entertaining, and some ground-breaking technical effects. But laughter ultimately dies on the lips, killed by the old enemy: Hollywood excess.

***Death Becomes Her*, Empire, PG**
***This Is My Life*, MGM Tottenham Court Road**
and Screen on the Hill, 12
***Slacker*, Metro, 15**
***Thousand Pieces of Gold*, NFT**
***Electric Moon*, MGM Panton Street, 15**

The laughs on offer in *This Is My Life* come gift-wrapped with tears. Now the enemy is Hollywood schmalz, even though the movie hails from Nora Ephron, author of *Heartburn* and *When Harry Met Sally*, dubiously dubbed the new Dorothy Parker for her acidic outlook on life. This marks her directing debut.

The film's heroine, a stand-up comedienne plucked from a daytime store job in New York to the bright lights of television and Las Vegas, seems abrasive enough in theory. She makes jokes about death. She wears garish polka-dot dresses to match her name, Dottie. She is played, moreover, by husky-voiced Julie Kavner, topping the bill after delicious supporting roles (recently for Woody Allen).

But Ephron's script, written with her sister Delia and adapted from a novel by Meg Wolitzer, never lets Dottie rip. For this comedy has an issue to tote. Dottie is a single parent, a working mother who spends months away from her two children just when the eldest suffers severe teenage angst. Goodbye jokes; hello tantrums, sour faces, a failed trip to find a lost father, and a gruelling succession of tearful hugs.

If characters and situations were drawn with bolder strokes, the family's emotional outpourings might be more palatable. Ephron directs with modest skill, and Samantha Mathis works especially hard as the introverted elder child, but Dottie's family still live in fantasy land. Success, when it comes, is immediate and huge. Mom may be gone, but there are wonderful baby-sitters on every corner.

It is also a world with no men of consequence: apart from being given the peculiar habit of eating paper, Dan Aykroyd (Dottie's agent and lover) just seems a lump in a wretched pullover. Is this bad writing, or Ephron's revenge for decades of films which treated women as paper dolls?

No Hollywood tinsel affects *Slacker*. This is extremely low-budget, out-on-a-limb cinema from a new, self-taught film-maker, Richard Linklater. There is no plot: the camera simply tracks the progress of some 100 young residents from the college town of Austin, Texas, idling away the day with fanciful talk about alternative realities, UFOs, anarchists, Madonna's pap smear (on sale, in a bottle), movies and television — anything but work. These are the "slackers", college drop-outs and

graduates, suspended in inertia. When someone apologises for being late, she is told, "That's OK, time doesn't exist." Linklater attempts to duplicate the vacuum with a camera that drifts from one oddball to the next as they cross paths in Austin's streets or coffee bars. Inevitably, this results in bald, boring patches. Yet there are juicy quirks along the way; and Linklater's experiment captures aimless youth in a fashion impossible when American movies play safe.

Cliches bounce back in documentary-maker Nancy Kelly's first feature *Thousand Pieces of Gold* (at the National Film Theatre for eight performances only), a Gold Rush tale that aims to shed light on the Chinese immigrant experience, but progressively droops to the shallow level of a quality American television movie. We begin with subtitles, as Lulu, a feisty Chinese girl, is sold to a marriage broker and lands in a tiny Idaho mining town, where the prospectors wear six-inch whiskers and permanent leers. Once Anne Makepeace's script descends into English, the

dialogue grows hobnailed boots. Three men lay claim to Lulu: a heartless Chinese saloonkeeper who legally owns her, a gentle mule-skinner who loves her, and the town's brooding outcast, who stands up for her rights. Guided by Kelly, Rosalind Rao, Chris Cooper and the cast attack the material with more feeling than it deserves. The photography is ravishing; but the golden vistas only push the film further towards romantic mush.

More disappointment in Pradip Krishen's Anglo-Indian film *Electric Moon*. Gullible Western tourists gather in a jungle lodge in central India, where the lodge's owners, an impoverished royal family, spoon-feed them a phoney version of life in the wild. This should have been a spicy satire. Arundhati Roy's script scores a few points, but all major characters prove dislikable. The plot drags, and Krishen indulges in distracting shots. A beaver eagerly displaying wounds received from a man-eating tiger is one thing; but why show the lodge manager perched on a toilet?

TOMORROW

Take your partners: song and dance goes centre-stage as the National Theatre, with backing from Cameron Mackintosh, prepares a new production of the musical *Carousel*

How to treat material with all Dew consideration

JEREMY ISAACS's rallying calls to his troops at the Royal Opera House, not quite Henry V in rhetorical quality, have nevertheless raised a few wry smiles among the beleaguered Covent Garden workers. At his last mass meeting, the general director admitted that the unloved production of *Les Huguenots*, seen at Covent Garden last year, had been burnt. John Dew's weird staging was rubbished by critics before an orchestral dispute mercifully cut short its run. Questioned about the financial prudence of destroying a new production after such a short life, Isaacs admitted that he had been advised that "it was more economic; there is so little storage space". John Dew's production of *La Juive* in May has already been cancelled.

● MORE laurels for Steven Isserlis, the young British cellist who recently made John Tavener's mystical cello concerto, *The Protecting Veil*, the most unlikely chart success of the year. He has won the \$10,000 Piatigorsky Artist Award, administered by the New England Conservatory in honour of the great Russian cellist Gregor Piatigorsky. He will also give the American premiere of *The Protecting Veil* at Carnegie Hall next April. "I am thrilled, since I was

lucky enough to meet and play for Piatigorsky several times in his last years," says Isserlis, whose plan to study with Piatigorsky was cut short by the latter's death in 1976.

Backing Bristol

BRITAIN's oldest working theatre, the Bristol Old Vic, is to be among the first to benefit from The

ARTS BRIEFING

ares Restoration Fund. It will receive £175,000 towards refurbishment, provided that additional local funding matches half this amount. That will come from the Bristol and West Building Society. The TRF, established earlier this year, is funded partly by the Treasury and partly by the Wollaton Foundation and Family Charitable Trust.

● "THE world's biggest first night" will take place on October 16, 1993, when more than 700 amateur actors will give 60 simultaneous premieres of a new play

specially commissioned from Peter Whelan. The event is the BT Biennial, funded by the phone company to the tune of £100,000, and involving members of the Little Theatre Guild of Great Britain. It was inaugurated last year with John Godber's *Happy Families*. Whelan, born in 1931, currently has his "who killed Christopher Marlowe?" play, *The School of Night*, in the Royal Shakespeare Company repertoire at Stratford. His BT play will be called *Shakespeare's Country*.

Last chance...

PROMENADERS who witnessed Mike Westbrook's spirited assault on the works of Rossini this summer will recall the delicately sculpted contribution of the saxophonist Chris Biscoe. A key member of Westbrook's various bands over many years, Biscoe is on the road with his own improvising quartet, Full Monte: Tony Marsh on drums, Marcio Mattos on bass and Brian Godding on guitar. The tour ends with dates at the Hobbit Bar, Southampton (0703 232591) tonight, South Hill Park, Bracknell (0344 484123) tomorrow, Jazz Rumours, London N16 (071-254 6198), Saturday and the Albert, Bristol (0272 661968) on Sunday.

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THEATRE: Benedict Nightingale at a whiskery melodrama fitfully revived

Old lines, subject to point failure

The Ghost Train
Lyric, Hammersmith

Figures from the past: (left to right) Richard Stirling, Kate Hardie and Aden Gillet

I HAVE a residual affection for Arnold Ridley's melodrama, remembering as I do how my spine stood up as I listened to it spookily unfolding on "Saturday Night Theatre". Perhaps steam radio is the best place for a play at whose climax a train puffs through a station, brakes screeching and whistle whaling, on its way to the same watery tomb into which it plunged 20 years before, and perhaps another over-imaginative 12-year-old should be reviewing it now. Transposed across the decades to a solid-looking stage, it left my backbone at its usual 98.6 degrees, as I suspect it did those of the middle-aged critics around me.

Maybe John Adams and his cast could do more to keep the tension up and the temperature down. The self-consciously ghostly music that wings across Roger Butler's waiting-room set at dimaxes is not, after all, calculated to make those dimaxes more alarming. At times the production veers awkwardly between realism and period spoof. Yet how much can be done with a play as dated as those television ads in which black-and-white blimps talk up a phone system with mouths crammed with invisible beebles?

Wives are "old girls", as in "I say, old girl, this is a business, isn't it?" Men are "old beans", and when some boulder or higher bothers them, come out with "dammit, sir, haven't you any sense of decency?" Proles are "my man" and inclined morosely to mutter in deep Mummerse: "baint no cars round 'ere", "baint no buses round 'ere", "baint nothing nowhere now", that sort of thing.

This last category is represented at the Lyric by Bill Oddie, troglodyte station-master faced with a roomful of passengers with no connection until

next morning. The first act mostly consists of his awful warnings ("they do say, to look upon the ghost train means death") and their refusal to tramp through the rain to a far-off farm. Unluckily, since he has a certain surly charisma, Oddie does not survive into Act II, which brings onstage a ghost-obsessed madwoman pursued by two gentlemen. If you are looking for clues, note their impeccable evening dress. It suggests either that the costume department does not know its job or that they have not walked five miles through the mire, as they claim.

I suppose I should not reveal anything more, not even that the villains turn out to be Rupert D'Alvarez of Barcelona, Otto Schmatz of Hamburg and (oddly, since a Bolshevik conspiracy is involved) Chicago Sal. But Ridley's plot is not exactly unpredictable. You will be on the right lines if you wonder if anybody but Peter Winkley in disguise could play a Bérde Wooster role as famously as Aden Gillet does. Again, do not worry about the fate of the financially beset home-moaners played by Richard Stirling and Kate Hardie, or about the troubled

marriage of Owen Brennan and Catherine Russell. In 1927, when the play was written, a wife who called her husband domineering needed only to be reminded of her vulnerability to be reconciled to him.

As for the ghost-train itself — well, almost all that can be done with light and sound is done. Maybe it is, as someone says, "as real as Plymouth Express". But on the last occasion I travelled from Plymouth the train was two hours late, and by the time we reached London, everything seemed unreal. Significant, perhaps?

JEREMY KINGSTON

Full of Filipino fables

Lemlunay
Riverside Studios

The title is a Filipino word for a paradise that has been lost but to which people hope to return. It may not be the only Filipino word for this, since we are told that 21 ethnic groups exist on the island of Mindanao, where Kalibw Theatre Collective comes from, and there may be scores more on the other islands.

An atlas shows the Philippines resembling two halves of an oval fruit that has been pulled apart, scattering large seeds across the space between. Luzon, with the capital Manila, is the northern half; Mindanao the southern one, and it appears to contain the familiar mix of volcano, poverty, a threatening military and exotic musical instruments.

Eruptions are mentioned only in

passing but the others come well to the fore in this pleasant, staged introduction to a generally harsh way of life. Oxiann is presenting the show as part of its golden jubilee celebrations.

The first section is taken up with introductory greetings: a dozen ways of saying "Hello" and an almost Christmas pantomime exercise in audience reply, calling out the welcome that goes "Aa, aa-a-a, oo-oo" with the lips tightly brushed by the hand. That is because this particular ethnic group does not care to show the inside of the

mouth to strangers. The exotic grooves, large or small, suspended or lying on the table, all have a protruding central boss that is gently smothered with a small truncheon while the other hand grips the neck of the boss to govern the extent of the vibrations.

In the show's second part, two genial refugees tell, in English, of the unplanned fun to be found in life at the displacement camps — a response that could come across as trifling pandering to the demands of entertainment were it not that the grim truths of

corruption and want are never far from the tales they tell. One of these is a version of the two mothers juggling at a child (audience participation required) to reveal who is the true mother.

Brecht used his fable, and in his Marxist period might have picked up the myth that figns the show's closing section. A young warrior arrives at a village and explains to the peasants that they are backward and their land is in a state of decay. What is striking about the conclusion is that the man is shown to be wrong.

As always, if war and greed that cause the distress. But a revolutionary new system is not the answer. That itself is a revolution.

JEREMY KINGSTON

TELEVISION REVIEW

Better brushed out?

ONE of the major bird artists of the early 19th century, P. J. Selby, used to draw from skins — and his butler would skin the birds for him. It is a far cry from Selby to the present-day German wildlife artist Wolfgang Weber, whose activities were the subject of last night's *Survival Special: A Brush with Nature* (ITV).

We saw Weber stalking Nepalese tigers, retreating slowly from Alaskan brown bears and going down 150 feet on a rope into a cave of Mexican bats, pen in hand all the way. He specialises in noting down the movements of animals and birds from life, and is always putting himself at risk to get as close as he can to them. Then he paints watercolour pictures from his sketches, playing loud Beethoven to help recreate the excitement he felt out in the field.

The programme was made by an outstanding wildlife film-maker, Dieter Plage, as a tribute to Weber, artist in

another medium. But it did not work out quite like that. Weber just got in the way of shots of the animals. He seemed a brave, agreeable man, but what he was doing just was not very interesting, while the animals were riveting. And who was bringing us the animals? The cameraman.

Even Weber's skill at creating the illusion of movement in his pictures was completely overshadowed by the sight of the animals actually in action — the bears catching salmon, a mountain lion pursuing a white hare in the snow, a falcon stooping on the bats as they came out of the cave. There were some delightful shots of sea-lions climbing over Weber on a Galapagos beach, until the head of the harem came out of the sea to round them up — but what was Weber here but a prop?

As for Weber's finished paintings, though they were full of energy, to my mind they were over-dramatic and garish. The colour was also used to



Endgame: wildlife artist Wolfgang Weber (right foreground) at work

produce a highlighting effect, fur vibrantly with golden light, waterfalls luminously blue and white, brightness and shadow always in the strongest contrast.

No doubt Plage's motives were pure, his admiration for Weber wholly sincere. Nevertheless *A Brush with Nature* ended up as much more of a

tribute to wildlife film-makers than to a wildlife painter. Ben in the shots that displayed Weber's courage, you could not forget that the cameraman was standing behind him (or even in front of him, recording its expression) as the tiger stared at the both.

DERWENT MAY

LONDON

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TODAY'S EVENTS

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Karl Knight

Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2 (071-240 1088/1911), tonight, 7.30pm.

ART FROM ABOVE In terms of the safety contemporary, Ireland is making by far the best contribution to the current "Tender to the North" festival of contemporary art. The show is a series of temporary galleries in the new St. James's Theatre, 10, St. James's, SW1 (071-253-8800). 7.45pm.

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Can Booker discover a Tolstoy?

Russia now has its own version of the Booker prize. Guy Chazan asks whether the award will succeed in reviving the great traditions of Russian literature

A writer gets permission from the Security Ministry to spend his summer holidays in a German concentration camp. While there he falls in love with a two-headed female prison guard. Now read on, as they say.

This is the start of *A Month in Dachau* by Vladimir Sorokin, Moscow's leading literary hooligan, and one of the six writers shortlisted for the first Russian Booker prize, to be announced next Tuesday. Dreamed up by Sir Michael Caine, the chairman of Booker, as a way of reviving the great traditions of Russian literature, the prize has hit Russia at a critical stage in its cultural history. The grotesque excesses of Sorokin are only one symptom of the growing pains.

The Booker jury — Russian critic Alla Latynina, English professor John Bayley, Russian novelist Andrei Shtov, the American publisher Ellendea Proffer and émigré Russian writer Andrei Sinavsky — faced a gargantuan task, sifting through 53 works put forward by 37 nominators from Russia, America, England and Israel.

Why has the event caused such a hubbub among Russia's literary cognoscenti? Well, there is the money: to impecunious Russian intellectuals a £10,000 prize seems a fortune, and a win will also provide access to publishers, translators and markets the average Russian writer can only dream of. In fact the Booker story is in some ways an allegory of Russia's current plight. A once-mighty superpower relies on hand-outs from former enemies to survive an economic crisis and Russian literature, bereft of state support, is forced to accept what Alla Latynina calls "an act of cultural altruism" from foreign patrons. It is a humiliating climbdown, but in some ways a welcome one. The Booker comes at a time when the old state prizes, always more a reward for ideological rectitude than literary merit, are seen as devalued and discredited.

The six shortlisted candidates reveal an extraordinarily vigorous and eclectic literary scene. There is everything here: a plundering of Russia's literary heritage, and often bold attempts to invent a new style. But what links the writers is their

wholesale rejection of socialist realism, the official dogma that dominated art under communism. "Russian literature was made optimistic by violent means," says one shortlisted writer, Alexander Ivanchenko. It was writing robbed of authenticity. Since glasnost, writers have been trying to relearn and recover that elusive, authentic voice.

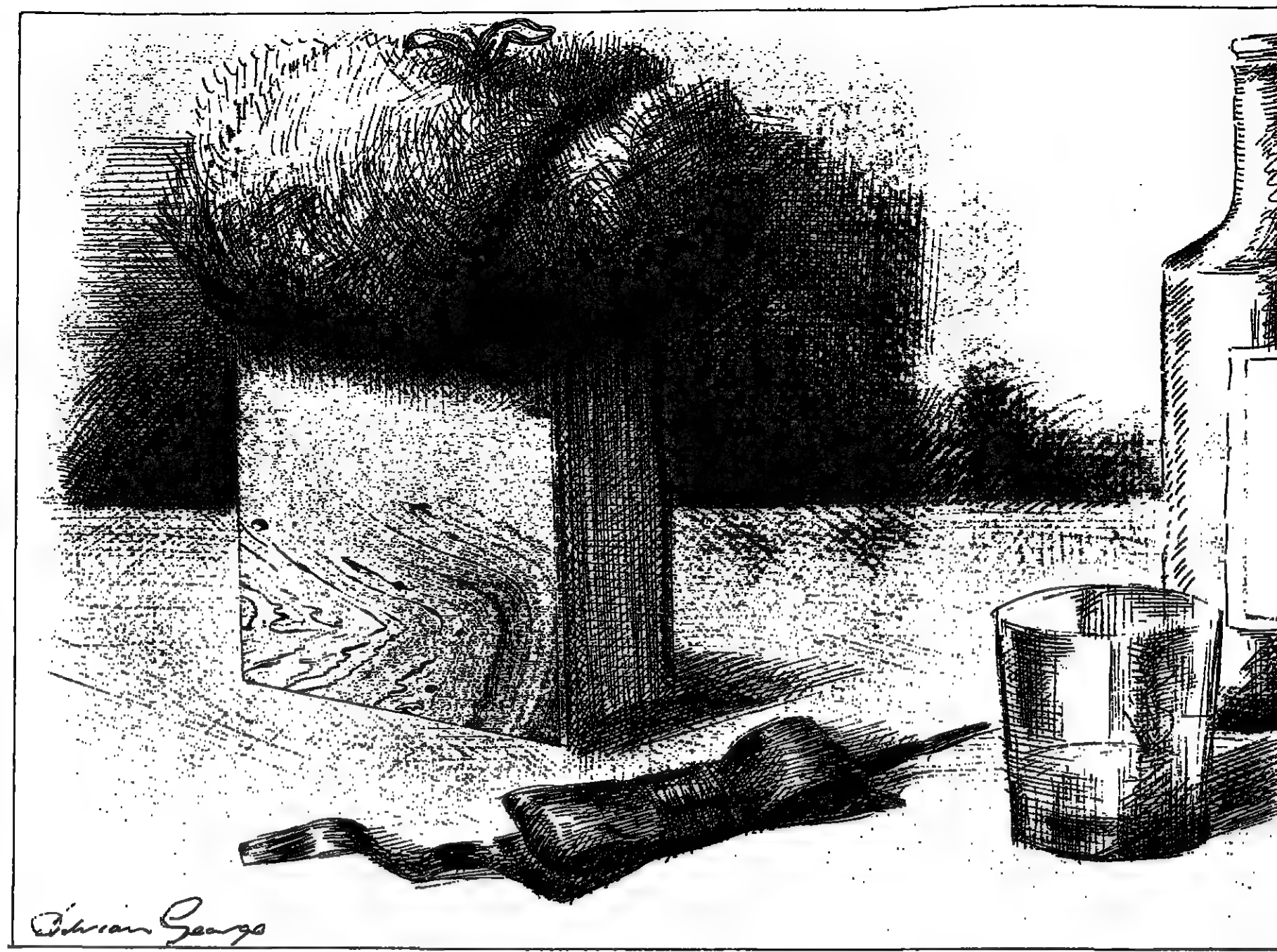
The post-perestroika writer Lyudmila Petrushevskaya, represented on the Booker shortlist by her story *The Time: Night*, staked her claim to fame with a bleak and brutal vision of Russian domestic life, which turned the sunny optimism of the old dogma inside out. In Petrushevskaya's overcrowded Moscow flats, natural family ties break down and are replaced by treachery, fear and mutual disgust. But the vision is already beginning to lose its appeal. "This was a brave thing to say when everyone else was

trumpeting the spirituality of the new Soviet man," says Alla Latynina. "But now tastes are changing."

Glasnost lit the fuse that caused an explosion in Russian literature, and critics are only now picking through the debris, separating the nuggets from the ephemera. Critical judgment was initially blinded by the joy at being able to read so many previously banned books. Now, readers are fussier. The first wave of angry historical novels about Stalin's crimes, and the ensuing tide of Petrushevskian masochism, has been superseded by a more traditional prose, epitomised by the work of another Booker candidate, Mark Kharitonov.

"His prose is intelligent, calm and sophisticated," says critic Alexander Arkhangelsky. "He is not over-excited, he does not denounce anyone: he is just himself." Kharitonov's novel, *Lines of Fate or Milashevich's Trunk*, is an intensely literary work about a scholar researching a dissertation on a little known turn-of-the-century writer. Russian readers can identify the writer as the philosopher Vasily Rozanov, and this don'tness has attracted critics who see traces of a new and refreshing elitism.

The enthusiasm for Kharitonov is symptomatic of the stratification of tastes now taking place in Russia. "It is dividing up into an elite reading public and a mass



Adrian George

readership," says John Crowfoot, the English translator who organised the Russian end of the Booker. "Literature is becoming the pursuit of intellectuals."

Meanwhile, the average reader browses at subway bookstands, scanning the Agatha Christies, the sewing patterns and dog-owner manuals, the science fiction and the soft porn. There is no home-grown mass literature. The most popular brand — crime fiction — is an imported genre. Russia's fastidious writers seem unable to cater for popular tastes, to accept the dictates of the market and churn out commercially viable pulp fiction.

Critics opine that of Russia's 3,000 publishing houses, only about 15 publish serious literature. Most of the small companies that sprouted in the late 1980s folded when Russia's reform government lifted price controls, and the cost of paper and printing rocketed. Russia's prestigious "thick journals", during the perestroika years the main disseminators of long-suppressed émigré and non-conformist literature, have seen circulations plummet as prices soared.

The decline of the journals coincided with the rearing interest in Soviet-era *samizdat* classics. The best-selling writer of 1991 was the exiled dissident Alexander Solzhenitsyn. But this was an anomaly.

The age of the great writer-cum-moralist with mass appeal is over. Not only is the old Tolstoyan tradition of writer as prophet coming to an end; so is the glasnost age, when writers hogged the limelight as self-appointed defenders of the new freedoms. Politics and literature are now disengaged.

Hence the macabre extravagance of Vladimir Sorokin, who proudly declares that politics, ethics and morality have no place in his work. His fascination with fascist and Stalinist aesthetics repels many, yet he has a loyal following among Moscow's hip youth. A raffish dandy with a Mephistophelian beard, Sorokin does not mourn the dying myth of the Russian writer. His McEwan-esque stories delight in foiling the reader's expectations of a moral resolution, offering instead a string of sick punchlines.

But Sorokin admits that, deprived of any moral stature, the post-Soviet writer has turned into that great Russian literary archetype: the superfluous man. "The old reader is distracted, the new one has not appeared yet," he said in a recent interview. "And it will take a long time for the present generation to tire of Stock Exchange news and James Bond novels, and start to want literature. At the moment, the writer just looks silly. It is not his time, no-one needs him." One suspects that not even a Booker Prize can put that right.

Masterpieces in wood from Stone

SIMON Lawrence's Fleece Press has just published *Reynolds Stone: Engraved Lettering in Wood*. Among more than 40 of Stone's designs are the royal arms, classic and bold, an unused masthead device for *The Times* and a bookplate for the Prince of Wales. As the colophon records, "the blocks were printed by hand on an 1853 Albion hand-press and took 392 hours to print". The introduction by Stone's apprentice Michael Harvey, who points out that his work has more affinity with Renaissance calligraphy than with Eric Gill, is discriminating (the swashes of the first version of the "Cymbeline" titling for *The Nonesuch Shakespeare* give "an irritating sugges-



century Venetian Francesco Bartolozzi. Thanks to "spirited bidding" from rival Italian dealers the 18 lots more than doubled their estimates to fetch £20,000.

NEXT month sees the appearance from Virgin of *Let Me Take You Down*, a rake through the mind of Mark Chapman, the man who shot John Lennon. It follows the same publisher's *The Red Ripper: Inside the Mind of Russia's Most Brutal Serial Killer*. Murderers are perhaps the only famous people not already subjects of biography. But who commissions this stuff? Who reads it? Who needs it?

JIM MCCUE



She got up and went away. Should she not have? Not have what? Got up and gone away.

Yes, I think she should have. Because it was getting darker. Getting what? Darker. Well, there was still some.

Printed here for the first time, "She got up and went away" is one of 15 typescript poems by Sieve Smith (left) to be included in a Sotheby's sale on behalf of the London Library on December 15, as part of the library's 150th anniversary.

Day left when she went away. Enough to see the way. And it was the last time she would have been able... Able? ... to get up and go away. It was the last time the very last time for. After that she could not. Have got up and gone away any more.

Two nights of passion and bliss

Massenet's *Esclarmonde* is an opera dear to the hearts of the composer's admirers, if only for the reason that it is so seldom performed. This has little to do with its intrinsic merit. It boasts one of Massenet's most shamelessly erotic love duets and much colourful action, deftly dispatched in music whose vigour and pace might surprise those who know only *Manon* and *Werther*.

No, the main reason for *Esclarmonde*'s rarity is that Massenet wrote it for the Californian soprano Sybil Sanderson, who not only had the susceptible composer at her feet in 1889 but also had a remarkably extended upper register — up to top G, or "Sol Eiflet" as the Parisians affectionately dubbed it. In our day only Joan Sutherland has tackled it, and she left it until perhaps a little late in her career — early 1980s — to portray a teenage Byzantine Princess who uses her magic powers to transport the man of

Rodney Milnes seizes the chance to see a rarely staged opera by Massenet — twice



No expense spared: Lorenzo Mariani's Turin staging

her choice, the Frankish knight Roland, to an *Alcina*-style magic island for the sort of nights of bliss to which only the French language can do justice. When he returns to his Saracen-bashing duties, she materialises each night to keep him on the boil.

The prospect of two produc-

tions of *Esclarmonde* opening in Europe within days of each other proved impossible to resist: the transfer of the St Etienne Massenet Festival version to the Opéra Comique was followed by a brand-new staging, the first ever in Italy, to open the season at the Teatro Regio in Turin.

The opening night at the Opéra Comique was compromised by a selective Metro strike. Unlike the character she was portraying, the prima donna failed to materialise, and despite a 45-minute delay the first act played to an audience of about 50. The piece was decently, perhaps too decently, conducted by Patrick Fournillier. But it was more than decently sung. The co-*Esclarmonde* leading roles were double cast: as Daria Mazola, and her steely, penetrating soprano coped efficiently with the excursions above the stage. Her Roland was the Marseilles tenor Luca Lombardi; he has a good, Thill-like ring to his tone but is a bit of a stick on stage.

Another reason for *Esclarmonde*'s rarity lies in its demand for stage spectacle. Claude d'Anna's economy production simply ducked this: a permanent set, magic effects skimped, the exiguous St Etienne chorus confined mainly to the (by chance empty) stalls area. But Turin

hurled a great deal of money at Lorenzo Mariani's staging. Magic islands rose and fell, a full complement of Naiads and Dryads capered, the huge chorus thundered, and there were almost as many magic objects flying through the heavens as in Philip Glass's *New York Voyage*. Pasquale Grossi's sets and costumes were a riot of colour.

Alain Guingal conducted without apology — the love music pulsated with improper lubriciousness — and the opera was sung in comprehensible French. Young Alexandrina Pendatchanska, the WNO's memorable Gilda, sang the title role; she may not yet command ideal weight of tone, but she has the top and is an exceptionally musical singer. Her Roland was Alberto Cupido, not always quite in tune but robust of tone, and Michele Perusi was an especially fine Emperor. The production soon travels to Palermo, not strictly *en route*, but if you happen to be passing...

Maier and Thierry Guiderdoni danced a sensationally constructed, graphic pas de deux; dramatic blocks and lines of dancers moved dangerously across the stage. And then, there were those bits of business (possibly nonsense, possibly not) that often give each piece its individual colour: here, a potted plant and three wizard-characters who manipulate wands.

New *Sleep* is wonderful, vintage Forsythe. But with works such as *As a Garden in this Setting* he shows that he can choreograph in more than one key. And it is this closing piece that lingers in the mind with its quiet, wistful mystery.

NADINE MEISNER

DANCE: PARIS

Forsythe's saga rumbles on

The French have become ravenous amateurs of William Forsythe's work. The company he leads, the Frankfurt Ballet, has a second home in Paris's Châtelet theatre, where it appears for two seasons every year. For the first two thirds of his latest triple bill there, Forsythe gave his audience what they expected: fierce post-classicism, with extreme shapes, tilted balances and fast, sharp footwork. But with the closing, new piece, *As a Garden in this Setting*, they found another Forsythe, atmospheric, bucolic, almost poetic.

Here indolence replaced driving activity: his tightly composed group patterns disintegrated into a stage popu-

lated by desultory individuals who often just stood about as if aimless. His choreography deconstructed and dislocated not ballet but contemporary dance, creating a language of virtuosic detail, every segment of the body exploited to its utmost. Only the high-tech and oblique manner of treating the design remained familiar. A television screen showed images of trees, the sky, water. Thom Willems's score overlaid distant melody with birdsong; while wooden

tabletops occasionally rolled about the stage, their sound like rumbling thunder.

The piece disconcerted at least one section of spectators, who talked loudly throughout. They had been as quiet as angels, though, during the previous *Herman Schmerman*, created for New York City Ballet in May. This, not surprisingly, has a strong echo of Balanchine, NYCB's founding father. Forsythe himself has been dubbed the Balanchine of the 1990s. The quin-

ter of two men and three women has, since entering the Frankfurt repertoire, been extended by a playful duet for Francesca Harper and Kevin O'Day. It is fluently put together, an expert but unexceptional exercise in pure dance. The remaining item, *New Sleep*, was also created for another company, the San Francisco Ballet, in 1987. Like the rest of the programme, it has an electronic Willems score, throbbing, thudding, ominously ticking. Tracy-Kai

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Press lord and a gentleman

J. W. M. Thompson on a life of William Camrose, head of a Fleet Street dynasty

When Viscount Camrose died in 1964, Harold Nicolson wrote in his diary: "He showed that one could be a Press Lord and a gentleman. He was an example to the newspaper world, and I am wretched at his death." Sixteen years later, when I went to work at the old *Telegraph* building in Fleet Street, Camrose was still a powerful presence. His name was often respectfully invoked. His watchful spirit seemed to stalk the corridors.

All that now belongs to the past. The *Telegraph* papers have new owners, an American bank occupies 135 Fleet Street, and Camrose, although he was a major influence for good in 20th-century journalism, is today not much remembered. Indeed, a forgetful professor, writing about press barons recently, could say: "Beaverbrook is still the only figure from a comprehensive (he left at 16) to reach the giddy heights. He is living (sic) proof that press barons matter." How very odd to read that in the *Sunday Telegraph*.

William Berry, later Camrose, started work as a

cub reporter on the *Mercury Times* at the age of 13, having been educated at the St David's Primary School (which cost two pence a week) and the Higher Grade school (which was free). Whereas Beaverbrook, having attained the "giddy heights" by methods which earned his nickname "Beenasbrook", thereafter devoted himself to the pursuit of power, Camrose was always a dedicated newspaperman.

A biography of Camrose, therefore, is in essence a slice of newspaper history. Its very publication is a bit of newspaper history, too, since its author, Lord Hartwell, is Camrose's son, and the writing of it has engaged him since the traumatic events which swept away his own control of the *Telegraph* empire six years ago. This closeness to the subject, combined with an archive of private and business papers, has produced a memorable portrait and many juicy plums of Fleet Street and political lore. The portrait is an admiring one, touched at many points by obvious affection, but as one would expect of the author, it puts truth and accuracy first.

When Camrose took over *The Daily Telegraph* in 1927, its circulation was a derisory 84,000. He took it well above the million mark. His brilliance showed itself in identifying a huge potential market that was looking for something superior to the Northcliffe type of popular journalism. "We are creating a new public," he said, and he had an exact sense of what that public required.

I have sometimes heard Hartwell say that the "early years" chapters in biographies are usually boring

and best cut, but this rule does not apply to his own book. The story of Camrose's early struggles gives an engaging picture of cheerful bohemian life in Fleet Street at the beginning of the century. And the Berry family of Merthyr Tydfil was not exactly commonplace.

Camrose was one of three sons of a local estate agent. The others became Lord Buckland and Lord Kemsley respectively, making a probably unique family bag of peerages; and they were all strictly self-made men. Camrose worked his way swiftly up the ladder of journalism and publishing, and the younger Kemsley soon joined him in London. Buckland amassed a business fortune in Wales. All became rich, with grand houses, yachts, sons at Eton and so forth. Like Northcliffe, Camrose founded his fortune with modest periodicals. *The Advertising World* was the first, followed by magazines such as *Health and Strength* and *Boxing*. A giant photograph shows young Camrose pretending to be a boxing referee for a publicity stunt — a far cry from the stern master of *The Daily Telegraph* of later years.

But unlike his brother, he never disdained his origins. In later life Kemsley became ridiculously self-important, which evidently irritated his elder brother and which Hartwell makes fun of. Of Camrose he writes: "He had 'self-advertisers', anyone meeting him for the first time would have recognised him for a considerable man, but, if perceptive, would have recognised, too, his innate shyness and reserve." Like father, like son.

Camrose was not a political animal, but naturally he was courted by politicians; once, Hartwell tells us, he sprained his ankle turning sharply to avoid Samuel Hoare, whom he detested. His closest political friend was Churchill, and there are interesting glimpses here of their relationship: over Munich for example, or in their more mundane negotiations over the plan to escape Labour's 98 per cent income tax on the earnings from Churchill's war memoirs.

Others — including Minchew, Beaverbrook and the first Lord Rothermere — appear in a less kindly light. There is a new and revealing version of how Beaverbrook "chided" Camrose over the acquisition of the *London Evening Standard*.

There are also pleasing minor characters like Harold Snodgrass, who was thrown downstairs by Northcliffe; and there are many good stories. Lord Hartwell has written a delightful book. His next task, surely, must be to write his own memoirs, and so bring the dynasty tale up to date.

J.W.M. Thompson was editor of *The Sunday Telegraph*, 1976-86.



Lord Camrose (right) in 1936, shown with the politician Oliver Stanley. The *Sunday Times* was then owned by the Berry family

Proud to be Establishment

Oliver Letwin

PICNICS ON VESUVIUS
Steps Towards the Millennium
By William Rees-Mogg
Sidgwick & Jackson, £17.50

For most of the 20th century, the British Establishment has been a Jekyll and Hyde affair. Jekyll-Establishment-man is decorous, sensible, broad-minded. Hyde-Establishment-man is secretive, complacent, snobbish, and frivolous — signs treated without reading them, despises anyone who breaks the rules of the club, and turns vicious when threatened.

Perhaps because of this dual character, the Establishment has an air of mystery and fascination. So one welcomes any illumination on offer — and who better to offer it than Lord Rees-Mogg? Interior of medieval wealth, Editor of *The Times* 1967-81, Chairman of the BBC, Chairman of the Broadcasting Standards Council, Rees-Mogg is the Establishment if anyone is.

At first glance, the Rees-Mogg essays reproduced in *Picnics on Vesuvius* are pure examples of the Jekyll tendency. The tone is appropriately lofty, the sentiments appropriately distinguished, and the judgments are appropriately balanced. When Alexander Milne writes a critical book, Rees-Mogg comments: "What a remarkably honest and dispassionate book it is." When Maxwell dies, he remarks cynically: "I shall remember him with affection... I was always suspicious of him." This is fine on-the-one-hand-on-the-

other old-style *Times*-leader stuff. But beneath the tone, there is something rather odd going on in these essays. Where are the Establishment views? On AIDS, instead of the expected sympathetic cluck, Rees-Mogg gives a remarkably robust assertion of the value of "faithful marriage". On immigration, an equally robust response is evoked by a poll showing "massive majorities for fear and prejudice" which makes Rees-Mogg "feel what (expletive deleted) we English are".

There are vehement attacks on communism ("it is like a blind, one-legged centaurian on the Centre Court at Wimbledon"); socialism ("if you choose the wrong theory,

representatives of radical chic, but from Downing Street, the most Establishment of addresses. In other words, when Rees-Mogg had the temerity to be interesting, he was not departing from the Establishment, but rather expressing its condition in the late 1980s.

The question implicitly raised by the essays is whether this radicalisation of the Establishment was temporary or permanent. Alas, all the signs are that the radical period was a temporary phase. The Establishment is now busily persuading itself that the most commonsensical and balanced economic policy is to have several conflicting economic policies, that the collective genius of the CBI and TUC will — contrary to all past evidence — see us through every possible difficulty, that the mounting tensions in Central and Eastern Europe and the rise of fascism in Western Europe are little local difficulties.

This sort of fuzzy optimism will be as disastrous as it was before the 1980s. A short time from now, we shall look back at Rees-Mogg's pieces as a wonderful reminder of the brief time when the grandest of the grand thought it was their business to take out the magnifying glass rather than to observe the passing scene through rose-tinted spectacles.



Clinched: James Stewart and Marlene Dietrich in *Destiny Riders* Again (1939), from *Hollywood: Sixty Great Years*

film historian has provided more than 19,000 movie and video listings: most of them are ridiculously telescoped, but every film is helpfully star-rated.

The Oxford Companion to American Theatre (OUP, £40) is likely to find a limited readership in Britain: there cannot be many takers for a book listing such American trivia as *Common Clay*, the one and only success enjoyed by the forgotten playwright Cleve Kinkaid, in 1915. The updated edition of Gerald Bordman's *American Musical Theatre* (OUP, £40) offers a comprehensive history of America's great gift to world theatre. If only there were a few photographs to liven up the text.

Mary Clarke and Clement Crisp have also done a little updating, bringing their invaluable 1973 book, *Ballet: An Illustrated History* (Hamish Hamilton, £25), into the Nineties to include such current hot items as Sylvie Guillem and Mark Morris. The text makes for an entertaining read, encompassing everything from the early spectacles of Renaissance Italy to the new artistic voices in Australia. The photographs, all black and white, are a delight.

BUSINESS

Stephen Hargrave

From an early age Hammer means money, but his end was fame. He travelled the world incessantly to snatch at the shirt-tails of the great. Carl Blumay's hatchet-job, *The Dark Side of Power: The Real Armand Hammer* (Simon & Schuster, £20) includes photographs of Hammer with friends such as Leonid Brezhnev and Nicolai Ceausescu ("a gentle man", said Hammer, "who cares only for his people"). Blumay himself was for 25 years the great benefactor's PR man. Like the scoundrels around Robert Maxwell, he always knew the boss was a wrong 'un, but didn't like to say.

"The chauffeur-driven Mercedes moved smoothly out into the fast lane and cruised at an even 70

mph," Andrew Davidson informs us. Is he sure? Might it not have been 71? There was, after all, a high-powered TV executive in the back of the limo, and as we all know from reading books like *Under the Hammer: The ITV Franchise Battle* (Heinemann, £16.99) time is money — lots and lots of it. Call me old-fashioned, but gratuitous bits of pseudo-information do nothing for my faith in the rest of the book. A pity, because the conduct of the ITV franchise auction was a tale well worth telling. That is more, perhaps, than British readers would say for the intrigues at Louis Vuitton and Moët-Hennessy, related in *Kings on the Catwalk* by Hugh Sebag-Montefiore (Chapmans, £9.99 pbk).

John Harvey-Jones was chairman of ICI for five years and now entertains TV audiences with his flying visits to companies in need of advice. *Troublesooter 2* (BBC, £14.99) is less entertaining than the

screen version, if only because Sir John's own humane presence is less evident (as is his taste in ties); but the book will make a false safe present for aspiring industrialists. Finally, in this year of Comeback Kids, Jim Slater has written a highly instructive book about "making extraordinary profits from ordinary shares". Once the most feared and controversial presence in British industry, Slater crashed with his company in 1974 but has since re-established his personal fortune. There were always those who said Big Jim's talent was for spotting companies rather than running them, and *The Zulu Principle* (Orion, £18.99) is a guide to doing it yourself. Not everyone will agree with his central idea of seeking to smaller companies, which are apt to fall as fast as they rise, but Slater's technique is laid out with the same unpadded clarity that distinguished his earlier autobiography.

Airing Balkan agonies

Anne McElvoy

THE FALL OF YUGOSLAVIA
By Misha Glenny
Penguin, £5.99 pbk

To the assembled hacks billeted in Zagreb's Esplanade Hotel between the summers of 1991 and 1992, the author was known as Misha Glenny. Whenever we turned our shortwave radios to that audio-bible of the world's conflicts, the BBC World Service, there he would be prophesying greater chaos, accelerating violence and escalations of slaughter in his lugubrious nasal tone.

He was right. Yugoslavia's death rattle has been accompanied by the bitterest war to blight Europe since 1945, and in his book, produced with admirable speed while he was pounding the scarred roads of the Balkans, he gives us the first authoritative account of the tragedy from its beginnings in the story hinterland of Croatia's Serbian enclave Krajina to its ghastly climax in the besieging of Sarajevo.

Yugoslavia is one of those cases in which an analyst could not err by being a pessimist, and Glenny's account of Slobodan Milosevic's turns of the nationalist screw make depressing reading. He evokes the ghastly complicity of both Serbian and Croatian politicians in what followed with remarkable even-handedness, without seeking to conceal that it was Belgrade's war machine which turned a historical clash of interests into a bloodbath.

He has a radio man's skill at presenting the tangled ethnic web with clarity by highlighting the personal fears, motivations and obsessions of those involved, supported by an awareness all too rare in modern journalists of the force of 19th-century history in the present conflicts of southern Europe. The panoply of ghastly characters enlivens what could have been a heavy read. At times, the writing leaves something to be desired — there are repetitions and solecisms which bedevil a hastily executed book — but I found this easy to forgive in such an energetic account.

Much more irritating is Glenny's wholehearted subscription to the personality cult — mainly his own. The number of entries in the index under his own name far exceeds those for the Croatian leader Franjo Tudjman.

This book will be welcomed by those who are stunned by the murderous excesses of Yugoslavia's demise and seek a clear account of its causes and course. He leaves us with the guns still blazing in Sarajevo and the warning that Western governments have failed to see the grim potential of nationalist disputes involving minority populations in the former communist world. The relevance of Glenny's perceptive pessimism is, alas, not limited to Yugoslavia.

COOKERY

Lesley Chamberlain

Ian's Colin Spencer in *Vegetable Pleasures* (Fourth Estate, £9.99 paperback), although the book lacks pizzazz. So much depends in food writing on the author's personality. Spencer seems companionable and committed, Pickford is vibrant, Koffmann conventional. Your reviewer is aesthetically-minded and puritanical.

For a more curious autobiographical background than Koffmann's and some excellent recipes, Indian food fans should, despite the title, consult the Curry Club's 250 *Favourite Curries and Accompaniments* (Platzko, £17.99). Author Pat Chapman, whose grandmother was orphaned in the Indian Mutiny, is also good on wine, usefully refuting the notion that it doesn't suit Indian food. He tips Australian Shiraz and bold Chardonnays. If you like Shiraz why not try a Côte Rôtie, a Vin de Pays de l'Ardèche or a Californian Syrah. Rosemary George's excellent and original *Lateral Wine-Tasting* (Bloomsbury, £9.99 paperback) works on the spreadsheet principle to enlarge your imbibing horizons.

Experiment is half the fun of eating and drinking. Yan-Kit So's *Classic Food of China* (Macmillan, £25) ensures we will go on dabbling in that mysterious tradition. And probably spilling it. Nigel Rees's *Best Behaviour* (Bloomsbury, £16.99) has nothing on chopsticks but suggests that table and sexual manners should still be kept clean in public. Use his book at Christmas like a sorbet between courses to stop conversation flagging, then resume eating. Clare Connery's *An Irish Country Kitchen* (Weidenfeld, £18.99), has sweet-topped casseroles, fish and shellfish in cheese sauce, and wonderful home-baked breads and cakes. Nigel Slater (*Real Food*, Michael Joseph, £14.99) is the man to seek out if you've left it all to the last minute. He's also great on rapid meals after work.

Reference books, particularly nice colourful ones about the arts, make ideal Christmas presents. Handy for dipping into whenever argument — or Trivial Pursuit question — dictates, they also look good on the shelf. And you never have to feel guilty about not reading them from cover to cover.

This year offers a bumper crop for armchair audiences: tomes to while away the dark winter nights, from the mainstream of Hollywood to the esoteric of classical ballet and the minutiae of American theatre.

One of the biggest books in terms of square footage is *Hollywood: Sixty Great Years* (Pion, £24.95), a liberally-illustrated history of the American cinema from 1930 to 1990. This one is strictly for coffee tables — carrying it around could result in serious wrist strain — but it must have for diehard Hollywood-watchers. Six film writers (including John Russell Taylor of *The Times*) have each analysed a decade (sub-divided into film genres and trends) in the life of the world's foremost propaganda machine. The early black-and-white photographs come off best; the quality of

ARTS
Debra Craine

some of the later colour is dubious. But the pictures are fun: my own favourite is Charlton Heston sharing an impassioned kiss with an amorous lady simian (Miss Kim Hunter) in *Planet of the Apes*. Pictures are nowhere to be found in the 1993 edition of *The Variety Movie Guide* (Hamlyn, £12.99), probably because there is no room for them. With 6,000 films listed alphabetically between its paperback covers, the pithy entries are selected from the 50,000-plus reviews published by *Variety* over the past 85 years, everything from D.W. Griffith's *Judith of Bethulia* (1914) to this summer's *Batman Returns*. The so-called "language" has been preserved. So for "chopchoppy" read martial arts film; for "oater" read Western. A glossary is provided.

Leonard Maltin's *Movie and Video Guide 1993* (Signet, £6.99) is another paperback which crams a wealth of detail into its densely filled 1,522 pages. The American

tors stumped up for wide-ranging expansion. Polly Peck collapsed in 1990, and Nadir now faces charges of theft and false accounting. In Asil Nadir and the Rise and Fall of Polly Peck (Collins, £9.99 pbk) David Barchard presents a readable, not overly novelised account of how it all happened, but bereft shareholders may feel he is too kind on the bankrupt billionaire. The last chapter is titled "An Indomitable Spirit".

Barchard compares Nadir to Jay Gatsby. The same could be said of "Dr" Armand Hammer. No doctor he, but a Prohibition bootlegger who spent his long life reinventing his history. Until he was 90, Hammer denied being Jewish. It may be true that his father was rich, as his son claimed; but then it may be true that he was poor, as Hammer also claimed. It is apparently true that Hammer met Lenin at the age of 23, but less certain that their intimacy went any further.

... three major novels plus gardening, cartoons and light fiction roundups for Christmas

Keeping the avengers at bay

Daniel Johnson

THE FURIES

By Janet Hobhouse

Bloomsbury, £15.99

criticised as too slow, but I found it both necessary and as good as anything that follows.

As the family firm quietly founders, the men die or divorce, until what is left can be shown in a diagram: "Four generations of

almost mystical Manichean symmetry and Mendelian simplicity, an unassailable oval, an egg-shape of female solitude." Helen and her feckless but glamorous mother Bett are left alone in Manhattan, practising their own version of elegant economy as the child searches for an escape from the humiliations of poverty.

She finds it first in the company of her sculptress grandmother, Gopi, who looks like Bett's sister and competes with her for influence over Helen. She bequeaths to

Helen an urge to make something of her talent and not to succumb to the melancholy stream which affects all the Woolfs, most of all Bett. Helen goes to England to find her father, and spends an unhappy period in his house as the butt of his accumulated guilt and bile, before escaping to the freedom of Oxford life. A hasty marriage to Ned, a rich young fogey, helps launch Helen into a literary career, but neither he nor her other lovers can restore the lost intimacy of her childhood. The still-youthful but increasingly dotty

Bett brings this period of comparative normality to a significantly edited "Men" to an end by killing herself. The Furies have overtaken Helen, and she descends into an abyss of grief and remorse.

Janet Hobhouse's treatment of despair is utterly honest and frightening to read. When the pain of loss is compounded by fear of morality, Helen's cup overflows. Her fortune richly deserves the happy ending that Hobhouse herself was denied. An unfinished but in no sense imperfect novel, this was her valediction; it achieves an unpretentious simplicity, classical and idiomatic, worldly and innocent. In *The Furies* Janet Hobhouse excelled herself: this book will live.

In his last letter, Keats remarked of the final stages of his illness: "I have an habitual feeling of my real life having passed, and that I am leading a posthumous existence." Janet Hobhouse seems to have written her last novel, *The Furies*, in a frame of mind not wholly dissimilar, even though she had not given up hope of recovering from cancer at the moment of her sudden death last year. This book is suffused with an ethereal yearning, the eloquence of a young, beautiful and gifted woman who knows she is living on time that was not on much borrowed as wrested from death.

All who met Janet Hobhouse were struck by her intense and sometimes morbid intelligence.

So it was a happy discovery for me that she could also be gentle and vulnerable, for the author of *The Furies* could not have created the character of Helen without deep reserves of compassion and unselfish nobility of spirit. The outlines of Helen's life are autobiographical: like her creation, Janet was brought up in New York and sent to England aged 16; she too went to Oxford, wrote books on Gertrude Stein and on 20th-century art, made a splash as a novelist, only to fall ill with cancer in her thirties.

But Helen is more than an alter-ego. She is a distinct person, a sister, perhaps, yet far removed from Janet's temperament and manner. Maybe it is just that Helen's narrative voice has more pathos, more self-knowledge, more wisdom than the quicksilver brilliance that Janet displayed in public.

The novel begins with a prologue, devoted to the rise and fall of the Woolf family, Helen's overpoweringly maternal milieu. Nearly 40 pages long, this prologue has been

Whydunnit in Q-sharp minor

The striking thing about Paul Auster's work is his ability to breathe new life into a branch of fiction that looked as if rigor mortis had set in years ago. *Leviathan* may not have quite the weird zing of his brilliant *New York Trilogy*, but Auster keeps the mind twisting, with his familiar compound of conceptual trickiness, plotwise panache and cool, hard prose like beaten aluminium.

Instead of simply indulging in the schoolboy self-consciousness and stylistic piddle-pranking of postmodernism for its own sake, Auster turns everything upside down, working hard on the "truth is stranger than fiction" front in order to strengthen the illusion that his novel is a frank, truthful representation of a world that just happens to be improbably complex, dishonest and brimful of wacky coincidences.

Michael Wright

LEVIATHAN

By Paul Auster

Faber, £14.99

Even before the novel opens, fiction and reality are teasingly intertwined: a note in the frontpiece extends special thanks to someone or other for "permission to mingle fact with fiction" and, when the first-person narrator introduces himself, it is no surprise to find that his initials are P. A.

Leviathan purports to tell "the true story" of the narrator's best friend, a fellow-writer called Benjamin Sachs, who has mysteriously blown himself up on a lonely road in Wisconsin. What follows is a kind of retrospective detective story — a "whydunnit in Q-sharp minor" — as Muriel Spark might put it — in which the bemused narrator struggles to piece together Sachs's bizarre life history from a jumble of unreliable evidence, like a puzzled reader trying to make sense of a difficult novel.

And that's just it. Sachs himself is able to "read the world as though it were a work of the imagination", and his own life begins to take on the lurid, contrived quality of fiction. By the half-way stage, Sachs has become far more than just a screw-loose writer with a taste for loose screwing. The narrator realises that Sachs is "no longer just my missing friend, but a symptom of my ignorance about all

things, an emblem of the unknowable itself". Shades of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, perhaps, with Sachs playing Kurtz to the narrator's Marlow?

Throughout the novel there is a bond between Sachs and the narrator which goes beyond mere friendship; the two men seem almost interchangeable, as if they were twin halves of the same person, or opposite faces of the same coin. And sure enough, when the narrator "reviews" Sachs's novel, he makes the sort of criticisms often levelled at Auster himself: "There are times when the novel feels too constructed, too mechanical in its orchestration of events, and only rarely do any of the characters come fully to life."

Certainly, there is a Meccano aspect to *Leviathan*. Like the Lloyd's Building, or Pompidou Centre, the novel's guts are all on the outside, with the nuts and bolts and plumbing openly displayed for all to see. For example, the narrator strenuously emphasises the chance events and coincidences that combine to seal Sachs's destiny (I counted 17), where most novelists might struggle to disguise them. Yet a sense of mechanical orchestration (what Sachs calls "the dark, complex pattern embedded in the real") is central to the work; hence the Richard Rogers approach to plot construction. And besides, Auster's carbon-fibre prose is so damn sleek, light and strong that he could probably get away with anything.

I can think of no British novelists who has so skilfully and inventively mastered — rather than mastered with — the so-called "possibilities" of copy-book postmodernism. The American has found his own powerfully masculine voice, and here uses it to resonant and thought-provoking effect.

Yet the detailed and deadpan austerity of the treatment is hardly likely to have the average reader trembling in his pyjamas. As with previous offerings, this is fiction to grab the mind, not the soul. So whilst Auster impresses mightily once again, he does not quite enthrall.



Epimedium sempervirens, an evergreen from the "snow country" of Ashu in northern Kyoto. This is one of 64 splendid original colour plates by Raymond Booth accompanying a learned text by Don Elick. *Japonica Magnifica* (Alan Sutton, £80) deserves to be a botanical classic

GARDENING

Ruth Stungo

denually interrupted by pictorial digressions which elaborate and repeat. Is our attention span so short? In contrast, it takes considerable persistence to find what you want in Laird's extensive references, due to the manner in which they are presented.

Penelope Hobhouse leans towards the plants and the part they have played in the history of gardening. She asks the interesting question how the availability of new sorts of plants at a particular time has influenced garden design, giving examples ranging from the development of early botanic gardens to Victorian carpet bedding. Though covering much familiar ground, her overview of an enormous field, from earliest gardens to

the present day, is impressive in both its range and depth.

A refreshingly different version of the history of gardening rather than gardens is provided in Martin Hoyles's *The Story of Gardening* (Journeyman Press, £12.95). Although it is well over a hundred pages before the name of Marx appears, it is clear that this is a history of the forgotten aspects of gardening that rarely find a place: the displacement of populations that accompanied the creation of new landscapes, the drudgery of horticultural employment, the forgotten contribution of Aztec and Arab. Although the heart sinks sometimes at the political terminology, it is a wonderful source of otherwise inaccessible information: kangaroos used as lawnmowers at Government House in Sydney!

Offering a different view of the gallant plant hunters, he invites us to consider them as agents of economic exploitation and colonial

greed. At a time when people are asking questions about who "owns" plant wealth, including those plants improved by human intervention, and what rights we have to exploit resources of other countries, this is a useful reminder of a not always glorious record.

The 3,000-Mile Garden is "an exchange of letters between two eccentric gourmet gardeners", rather than gardening on the gigantic scale (Pan Books, £14.99). Roger Phillips, ace photographer-author, gardens in London's Eccleston Square, while Leslie Land develops her skills in the harsher climate of America's Maine, and writes both on gardening and cooking. Far from seeming eccentric, they come across as deliciously well balanced, exchanging plans and suggestions, successes and failures, information about photography, and wonderfully inspiring recipes, particularly for the mushrooms about which both are so passionate.

BLOCKBUSTERS

Helena Troye

Cookson's success is due to establishing a leitmotif and sticking to it. No romantic novelist writes about turn-of-the-century Durham with such relish, just as no one in the field can match Maeve Binchy on 1950s rural Ireland.

So, for those dewy-eyed for the boom times of the very recent past, Penny Vincenzi's *Wicked Pleasures* (Orion, £9.99 pbk) is choc-full of money, sex and power — these stalwarts of the 1980s. The water-thin plot is embellished by all the trappings of Mammon — the palatial stately home, an East Coast banking dynasty and, of course, gallions and gallions of champagne. At 750 pages it's a long read — indulgent, enjoyable escapism.

Claire Rayner's less-than-swinging *Stakes* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £14.99) ends her protracted "Poppy" series about salt of the earth Londoners. An able writer, Rayner is given to dull dialogue and the whiff of worthiness is overpowering. One for die-hard fans only.

Italian journey into the Reich

Gina Thomas

DEATH IN ROME

By Wolfgang Koeppen

Translated by Michael Hofmann

Hamish Hamilton, £8.99 pbk

Wolfgang Koeppen's reputation rests to some extent on his prolonged silences. Now in his late eighties and living in Munich, he has not published a major work of fiction since his trilogy of the 1950s. This last volume, *Death in Rome*, appeared in 1954 and met with mixed reactions. Some critics hailed it as a masterpiece, but Koeppen also hit a raw nerve in Adenauer's fledgling democracy with the message that those who had colluded with the Nazi regime were only hiding under the mantle of the newly restored civil society — opportunists now as they had been then. The author was one of a group of left-wing intellectuals who dreamt utopian dreams after the collapse of Nazism and were bitterly disappointed by Adenauer's restoration of the old Weimar order.

Death in Rome is a haunting allegory about post-war Germany, written rather like a long prose poem. The title alludes to Thomas Mann's novella *Death in Venice*, and the text is full of hidden references to that masterly parable of decadence. Very much a product of its time, *Death in Rome* shatters the illusion that a reformed nation might rise from the ashes, for Koeppen does not believe that mankind can be reformed. Indeed, the book is infused with a deep sense of the futility of life.

Images of death are omnipresent in Koeppen's vivid descriptions of the Eternal City, which he uses as a backdrop for his surreal plot. The setting has profound connotations. For centuries, Rome has epitomised the yearning that Germans have felt for the south. Like Goethe they were drawn there by romantic visions of a bohemian life in the Mediterranean sun, free from constraints and surrounded by the relics of a great civilisation. It is here that Koeppen gathers together various members of one family, all of whom are in one way or another on the run from their experience of Nazism. But Rome offers no sanctuary to these tortured Germanic souls, who stand out starkly against the Italian ambience.

The central figure, Gottlieb Judejahn, is a leading Nazi who has slipped through the net. Condemned to death at the Nuremberg

trials, he has escaped to an Arabian country where he acts as a military adviser to the local potentate. His ideological fervour is undiminished by defeat. Judejahn has come to Rome under an assumed name to secure an arms deal. He finds himself there at the same time as his brother-in-law, Pfaffrath, a former Nazi who has accommodated himself to the new leadership and become mayor of his town. He wants to wield his influence to enable Judejahn's return to Germany.

Their involvement with the Third Reich has estranged them from their two sons, who are also staying in Rome. Adolf Judejahn has sought refuge in the Church, hoping to atone for the sins of his father and Siegfried Pfaffrath is an avant-garde composer whose symphony is being premiered in Rome under the baton of a refugee from Hitler's Germany. More by chance than by design, the concert unites the family briefly under one roof, before they are left once again to drift to their different fates.

Judejahn wanders the streets of the city still hankering after crude dreams of racial cleansing and Aryan domination which culminates in a frenzied finale.

Koeppen never allows his characters to be more than archetypal figures in a plot interspersed with sensual descriptions of Roman life. The Germans move around the city in a chilling dance of death set to the lyrical strains of Koeppen's evocative prose. The novel's literary merit lies in Koeppen's poetic language, which, sadly, loses some of its power in translation. *Death in Rome* still stands as a small masterpiece, inspired by the experience of Nazism, like the best works of Heinrich Böll, Günter Grass and Siegfried Lenz. Where are their equivalents today?

TIMES READER BOOK OFFER

The greatest chess battle of all time

By Grandmaster Raymond Keene

At last: the authoritative, move-by-move account of the meeting of the titans — Bobby Fischer and Boris Spassky, by International Grandmaster Raymond Keene, *The Times* chess correspondent.

After 20 years in the chess wilderness, the American champion Fischer returned to do battle with the Russian champion Spassky, the man he defeated for the 11th world championship in an epic struggle in Reykjavik, Iceland, in 1972.

The 30-game rematch was held in wartime Yugoslavia between September 2 and November 5 last for a record winner's purse of £2.6 million.

Raymond Keene was there and faithfully recorded it all. The dramatic chronicle starts with a detailed prelude



to the meeting and ends on Spassky's last, desperate move.

His book, *Fischer-Spassky: The Return of a Legend*, £9.99, is a must for all chess lovers. And a great gift!

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CARTOONS

Peter Brookes



"We're the three wise men"

election candidate hurls the innocent over a wall.

Completely Mad: A History of the Comic Book and Magazine by Maria Reidelbach (Bloomsbury, £15.99, pbk) is strictly for maddicts.

It reminds us how sharp and innovative it all was back in the 1950s and 1960s before the use of visual parody began to lose its edge.

The same applies to Glen Baxter: *Returns to Normal* (Bloomsbury, £12.99). It was all very funny when new, but the one-joke technique is now wearing thin. There are times when one begins to tire of captions like "There are times when I began to tire of polishing Mr Throngue."

Jacky Fleming with *Never Give Up and Be a Bloody Train Driver* (Penguin, £4.99) can be very witty indeed about a woman's lot, although her drawing too often detracts from the effect. But her zany picture of a woman in labour captioned "I've changed my mind" strikes exactly the right balance.

There are very few duds in *The Spectator Cartoon Book 1992* (Hamish Hamilton, £7.99, pbk). Thank God for a journal that takes humour seriously.

The *Daily Telegraph's* *The Best of Matt* (Chapman) has no colour, no glossy paper, costs just £3.99 and is best of all. It celebrates that rare thing: a daily cartoonist who never fails. Damn him.

● Peter Brookes draws for The Times.

Victoria Holt, still going, still prolific, has a devoted following, but on the evidence of her new offering *Seven for a Secret* (HarperCollins, £14.99) one cannot see why. What begins promisingly enough as the initiation of a lonely, adolescent orphan into life in an insular village, complete with batty old dame in a cottage in the wood and a surly young squire on horseback, deteriorates into cliché and mawkish rubbish. Even transplanting the plot to an antipodean island fails to lift the lazy, two-dimensional writing style and uninspired characterisation.

Catherine Cookson, doyenne of the northern saga, hits snail on the head, however, with *The Maltese Angel* (Bantam Press, £14.99), her latest tin bath tale. There's trouble at Gibson's farm when master jills a lass from the village and marries "a dancing piece from Newcastle". Mad, scorned Daisy indulges in some cattle-cripping, field burning and manslaughter before justice is done. Even then, Cookson continues to trowel on the tragedy for the next generation as the Great War looms. Needless to say, all ends happily. This will not fail to please the author's readership.

كلاسيكيات

Law Report December 3 1992 Court of Appeal

Sentencing guidelines on various aspects of recent legislation

Regina v Cunningham
Regina v Oliver
Regina v Little
Regina v Okinaka
Regina v Robinson

Before Lord Taylor of Gossforth, Lord Chief Justice, Mr Justice Potts and Mr Justice Judge

[Judgments November 27]

Guidance on the sentence restricting provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 1991, which came into force on October 1, was given in reserved judgments of the Court of Appeal delivered by Lord Taylor of Gossforth, Lord Chief Justice, in a series of cases specially listed together for hearing.

R v Cunningham

Robbery by a 22-year-old in a small shop at knife-point clearly fell within section 1(1)(a). Where the length of a custodial sentence was challenged, the Court of Appeal would be concerned with whether the term was appropriate under the criteria of the 1991 Act and was unlikely to be moved by nice arithmetic comparisons between periods under the old and new regimes.

Section 2(2)(a) enabled the sentencing judge to take the need for deterrence into account. The purpose of a custodial sentence had primarily to be to punish and deter, and the phrase "commensurate with the seriousness of the offence" in section 2(2)(a) had to mean commensurate with the seriousness and deterrence which the seriousness of the offence required.

Section 2(2)(a) prohibited adding any extra length to the commensurate sentence so as to make a special example of the defendant. Prevalence of the offence was a legitimate factor in determining the length of the custodial sentence to be passed.

R v Oliver; R v Little

Before October 1992 the appellants, aged 18 and 19 respectively, had committed offences for which they were placed on probation. Afterwards they committed crimes.

In view of sections 2(1) and 13(1)(2) of the Powers of Criminal Courts Act 1973 the making of a probation order before October 1992 was not a sentence and if the appellants committed any offence while subject to the probation orders they were liable to be brought back to court and dealt with as if they had just been convicted of the original offence: section 8 of the 1973 Act.

In view of section 14(1) of and Schedule 2 to the 1991 Act, when the appellants appeared before the court on October 5, they were liable to be sentenced as if they had just been convicted of the original offences for which they had been placed on probation.

There might well be cases where, notwithstanding that the offence itself passed the custody threshold, there was sufficient mitigation to lead the court to impose a community sentence.

Nevertheless, if a further offence or offences were committed while the community sentence was in force and the defendant was brought to court for sentence, he would have deprived himself of the mitigation.

self of much of the mitigation, such as good character, genuine remorse, isolated lapse and similar considerations which had led the original court to pass a community sentence rather than a custodial sentence.

Where the theoretical position might be in relation to consecutive sentences, it would usually be inappropriate for consecutive sentences to be passed for offences which did not themselves satisfy the requirements relating to custody or, indeed, for sentences to be made longer than strictly justified by reference to those offences which did qualify.

R v Okinaka

Section 3(1), (2) and (5) concerned a pre-sentence report and it was for the trial judge to decide whether the report actually available to the court was adequate for sentencing purposes and constituted proper compliance with the statute.

Provided that the report was in writing and was made or submitted by a probation officer or social worker and gave appropriate information about the offender in relation to the offences which brought him before the court, the judge was not obliged to ensure that every detail of information put before him by the probation officer was checked and confirmed in a further pre-sentence report or by way of addendum.

If he considered that a further written report was required to confirm further information the judge could, of course, adjourn the case but was not obliged to do so.

As to exceptional circumstances justifying the exercise of power to suspend a sentence under section 5(1), their Lordships could not lay down a definition of exceptional circumstances. It would depend on the facts of each individual case.

However, taken on their own or in combination, good character, youth and an early plea were not exceptional circumstances justifying a suspended sentence. They were common features of many cases. They could amount to sufficient to persuade the court that a custodial sentence should not be passed or to reduce its length. The statutory language was clear and unequivocal.

R v Robinson

The appellant was aged 16 at the time of the offence and the appeal involved the court in ruling on questions raised in a certificate of appeal by the trial judge relating to section 3(1), whether attempted rape was (i) a "sexual offence" as defined in section 75 of the 1991 Act, and (ii) a "violent offence" as defined in section 76 of the 1991 Act.

As to attempted rape, it was not necessary to hold that it would be an offence to common sense if the court were to accept the submission that attempted rape was omitted from the definition of sexual offence.

Their Lordships were obliged to approach the issue as a matter of construction of the section. Although attempted rape was included under section 75 of the Criminal Justice Act 1991, in the light of section 37 of and Part 1 of Schedule 2 to the Sexual Offences Act 1956, the offence was

properly to be regarded as an offence under the 1956 Act. In the circumstances, their Lordships had concluded that attempted rape came within the definition of sexual offence for the purposes of the 1991 Act.

As to violent offence, the definition meant "an offence which leads... to physical injury to a person" and did not require the injury to be serious.

The broad definition focused not on classes of offences specified in statutory provisions but on the individual facts of each case. The unfortunate victim, a lady approaching 90 years of age in her home alone at night, did in fact suffer actual physical injury as a direct result of the attempted rape. It was, therefore, a violent offence within section 3(1)(1).

The sentence of eight years in a young offender institution was right, within section 5(2) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1953. The sentence was not limited to a maximum of 12 months under section 63 of and Schedules 8 and 12 to the 1991 Act. Had the appellant been older the sentence might well have been longer.

Regina v Bentley
Regina v Summers
Regina v Harrison
Regina v Cox (David)
Regina v Baverstock

Before Lord Taylor of Gossforth, Lord Chief Justice, Mr Justice Potts and Mr Justice Judge

[Judgments November 30]

R v Bentley; R v Summers; R v Harrison

In each of the three cases where the defendants were aged 24, 29 and 26 respectively, it was necessary to consider the true construction of section 2(2) of the 1991 Act and the relation of subsections (1) and (2) thereof. They provided: "(1) An offence shall not be regarded as more serious... by reason of any previous convictions of the offender or any failure of his to respond to previous sentences."

"(2) Where any aggravating factors of an offence are disclosed by the circumstances of other offences committed by the offender, nothing... shall prevent the court from taking those factors into account for the purpose of forming an opinion as to the seriousness of the offence."

How the subsections related to one another had been the subject of much controversy and it had even been suggested that subsection (2) was in conflict with subsection (1). However, in their Lordships' judgment, Parliament must have intended the two subsections to be complementary.

Subsection (1) prohibited the sentencing court from regarding an offence as more serious simply because the offender had previous convictions. That prohibition applied whether the previous convictions were for different classes of offence, or even for the same class of offence as that before the sentencing court.

Section 2(1) embodied the principle established in case law before the 1991 Act, that an offender who had been punished for offences committed in the past should not, in effect, be punished

for them again when being sentenced for a fresh offence.

But section 2(1) went further. The criterion for deciding whether only a custodial sentence could be justified was the seriousness of the offence or its combination with one or more other offences.

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Tenant not liable for assignee's default

London City Corporation v Fell and Others

Herbert Duncan Ltd v Cluttons (a firm)

Before Lord Justice Nourse, Lord Justice Evans and Sir Michael Kerr

[Judgment November 25]

A tenant who assigns a business tenancy did not remain contractually liable to the landlord after the expiry of the term of the lease. The landlord could not recover from that tenant rent arrears resulting from the assignee's default during the continuation of the tenancy under the terms of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954.

The Court of Appeal so held in reserved judgments dismissing an appeal by the plaintiffs, the City of London Corporation, from the decision of Mr Desmond Perret, QC, sitting as a deputy judge of the Queen's Bench Division (*The Times* August 7, 1991; [1991] 3 All ER 234) returning their claim for arrears of £33,460 against the defendants, John Arnold Fell, John Edward Hayward and Edward Desmond Sturmer.

In the second case, heard consecutively to the first, the court allowed an appeal by tenants, the defendants, who were four partners in Cluttons, a firm of surveyors, from an order for summary judgment under Order 14 of the Rules of the Supreme Court in a sum of

£113,452 made by Mr Justice Tudor Evans in December 1991 in favour of landlords, the plaintiffs, Herbert Duncan Ltd.

Mr Andrew Arden, QC and Mr Nicholas Weir, QC for the City of London; Mr David Neuberger, QC and Miss Erica Foggin for Fell, Hayward and Sturmer; Mr Barry Denyer-Green for Cluttons; Mr Jonathan Brock for Herbert Duncan Ltd.

LORD JUSTICE NOURSE said that the effect of section 24(1) of the 1954 Act was to continue a tenancy of business premises after the end of the contractual term. The question was whether it also had the effect of continuing the contractual obligations of an original tenant who had assigned the tenancy before that date.

The question was answered by Mr Desmond Perret, QC, in the negative and by Mr Justice Tudor Evans in the affirmative. Which of them was right?

It might be thought curious that a question that was so fundamental to the working of Part II of the 1954 Act had not earlier arisen for decision. Probably it had taken the effects of a serious recession on the property market to make the question a live one.

In the first of the two cases, the plaintiffs in 1977 had demised business premises to the defendants for a term of ten years. In mid-trial would render the trial a nullity, certainly where no reason which could justify a change of judge existed.

A preliminary question which had to be resolved was whether the trial had jurisdiction to review the listing decisions of Southwark Crown Court.

Under section 29(3) of the Supreme Court Act 1981 the court had jurisdiction over the crown court except "in matters relating to trial on indictment". In *In re Smalley* ([1985] AC 623) Lord Bridge of Harwich had construed that phrase as meaning "an order affecting the conduct of the trial".

In the court's judgment, the decisions of the crown court were not merely orders affecting the conduct of the trial of the defendants, they were orders which, if followed, might affect the validity of a hearing before the jury. The result of implementing the decisions might be that there would be no trial at all.

Consequently, the court had concluded that it did have jurisdiction to review the crown court's decisions.

The next question was whether a trial commenced by one judge could be continued by a second judge.

It was the court's firm opinion that in a criminal trial there was no power to change the judge once the jury had been sworn until the moment at which the jury returned to give its verdict.

It was permissible, if there was a sufficient reason, such as death or illness of the trial judge, for another judge to take the jury's verdict. The mere taking of the verdict could not possibly be affected, so far as the new judge was concerned, by anything which had taken place in the trial up to that time.

Did the same principle apply to the trial of a serious and complex fraud?

The advantages of having the same judge throughout the trial of a complex and serious fraud case

immediately before death, he would have been entitled to a half share of the property subject to the mortgage and a half share of the insurance policy money, notwithstanding there was no surrender value nor was there realistically any sale value in the policy.

It could not be right that under the 1975 Act the value of the deceased's estate was made without regard to his testamentary death duty which was entitled to a half share of the property, and a half share of the insurance money was part of the estate.

There was no doubt that the effect of section 24(1) of the 1954 Act was to continue the tenancy as between the plaintiffs and G Ltd. But in December 1986 G Ltd was compulsorily wound up, having failed to pay the rent due to the plaintiffs in March. The plaintiffs then looked to the defendants, as original lessees, for payment of the arrears.

By section 24(1) of the Act a tenancy was not to come to an end unless terminated in accordance with the statutory provisions. "Tenancy" was not defined in the Act. It had to bear its ordinary legal meaning. To what did it refer in a case where the original tenant had assigned the tenancy before the end of the contractual term?

A tenant in ordinary legal parlance was someone who held land for another. Although he might remain contractually liable to the landlord, an original tenant who had assigned the tenancy could not properly be described as the tenant. He no longer held the land. It was the assignee who now held the land. It was he who had the tenancy.

It followed that where an original tenant had assigned the tenancy before the end of the contractual term the tenancy which section 24(1) provided was not to come to an end, and could only be the tenancy of the assignee. Since the contractual obligations of the original tenant formed no part of the legal relationship between the landlord and the assignee, and since they were not independently continued by the subsection, they were in no way affected.

If, as here, the original tenant had assigned the tenancy to a company, G Ltd, G Ltd had continued in occupation under the 1954 Act after the expiry of the contractual term.

That same issue was the first question raised by the defendants in the second case and for the reasons stated was to be resolved in their favour.

Two subsidiary questions were also raised. They depended on the terms of the contract between the parties and their resolution did not affect the defendants' entitlement to succeed on the appeal.

Sir Michael Kerr gave a concurring judgment and Lord Justice Evans agreed.

Solicitors: M.A.J. Colvin; Wilde Saper; Wray Smith & Co; Forsythe Kerrman.

Webb v Eno Air Cargo (UK) Ltd

Before Lord Keith of Kinkaid, Lord Griffiths, Lord Browne-Wilkinson, Lord Mustill and Lord Slynn of Hadley

[Speeches November 26]

Where a woman had been engaged to replace another who was pregnant and then discovered that she herself was pregnant, her dismissal by her employer had not, within the provisions of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, constituted unlawful discrimination.

Since, however, it was not clear from decisions of the Court of Justice of the European Communities whether that court would regard the fundamental reason for the woman's dismissal as having been her unavailability for the job and not her pregnancy, questions would be referred to the European Court of Justice before final judgment was given.

The House of Lords so ordered on an appeal by Ms Caroline Louise Webb from the Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Glidwell, Lord Justice Balcombe and Lord Justice Beldam) (*The Times* December 30, 1991; [1991] ICR 445), who had affirmed the Employment Appeal Tribunal (Mr Justice Wood, Mr T. S. Batho, Mr A. C. Blyth, Mrs M. L. Boyle and Mrs M. E. Sunderland) (*The Times* February 21, 1991; [1990] ICR 442) which had dismissed Ms Webb's appeal from an industrial tribunal.

Section 1 of the 1975 Act provides: "(1) A person discriminates against a woman in any circumstances relevant for the purposes of any provision of this Act if (a) on the ground of her sex he treats or would treat a man... more favourably than he treats or would treat a woman."

Section 5 provides: "(3) A comparison of the cases of persons of different sex... must be such that the one case is the same, or not materially different, in the other."



The way of champions: Aamodt shows off the skills he will be testing over three days' competition in Val d'Isère this weekend

Olympic aspirations not on the immediate skyline

Kjetil-Andre Aamodt in is the latest hope for a Norwegian winner of the skiing World Cup. David Powell tracks him down in Val d'Isère

THERE has never been a Norwegian winner of the men's overall Alpine World Cup, but with the Winter Olympics in Lillehammer next season, what better time than now to start? Ask the experts to throw their snowballs in the air to reveal the name of their favourite and at least half will land bearing the name of Kjetil-Andre Aamodt. And one of those snowballs belongs to Alberto Tomba.

When Tomba, the World Cup slalom and giant slalom champion, was asked for a pre-season tip, he named Aamodt. Two days later, Aamodt won the opening race in Sestriere, a giant slalom. The heavy questioning began. Did Aamodt think he could be overall champion? "It is too early to speak of any chances," he said. "I am young and need more experience. I am looking to rank among the top five and to win the World Cup in the future."

Twenty-one is young for the test of endurance provided by a 33-race season. But Aamodt has upset the odds before. This time last year, he suffered an attack of glandular fever so debilitating that he had to be drip fed, shedding two stone in weight. "It was

the worst experience of my life," he said. "I could do nothing. My goal was to eat. I lost three months after leaving hospital, he became the Olympic super-giant slalom champion. That was last winter. This winter, for the first time, he has come into a season fit and well. No broken legs, no twisted ankles, no broken collarbone, all which have clouded his past.

After this weekend in Val d'Isère, we shall know more of his prospects for beating Marc Girardelli, the four-time overall World Cup champion, and Paul Accola, the holder of a three-race super-giant slalom and slalom programme of tomorrow and Aamodt's intention is to ski them all.

The super-giant slalom is his strength, the downhill his weakness, and the slalom the discipline at which he has progressed the most. "Last season, I did not ski well in the slalom but I have changed my technique and improved,"

Aamodt said. The evidence was in his first run in Sestriere. "I think I can be good at downhill in the future, but I do not have any ambitions this year," he said. Just how far he is behind Girardelli, a former downhill champion, we shall see tomorrow.

Now that skiers can get rich on prize-money alone — Val d'Isère has SW£130,000 (some £58,000) to give away — Aamodt is reaching his peak at an opportune time. "We deserve it," he said, though he was surprised on opening his winner's envelope in Sestriere to find \$30,000 (£19,000). "I did not know it was so much."

No amount of success, or wealth, will ever make him Norway's No. 1 sportsman. "The cross-country skiers are the most famous because it is our national sport," Aamodt said. But cross-country did not appeal to him. "I like to ski down, not walk up," he said. For a moment, he made Alpine racing sound easy.

Derby swept out of Coca-Cola Cup in Highbury gale

Wright finds higher gear to steer Arsenal through

By Louise Taylor

ARSENAL booked themselves an excursion to Scarborough in the fourth round of the Coca-Cola Cup, courtesy of a 2-1 win against Derby County in a third-round replay at Highbury on Tuesday night.

Goals from Ian Wright and Kevin Campbell in the first 15 minutes left their first division opponents with an impossible task as a windswept Highbury and a 44th-minute penalty, which was converted by Mark Pemberton, proved their sole response.

Beforehand, George Graham, the Arsenal manager, had been critical of his forwards' work-rate. He was thus particularly pleased to see Wright score his eleventh goal of the season, and his first in four games. The England forward said: "The manager was right to have a go at me. I

haven't been reaching the standard I set myself."

If Cambridge United tomorrow chose Gary Johnson as their manager in preference to Ian Atkins, the Birmingham City assistant manager, and George Burley, the Ayr United manager, he will have much to thank Gary Rowett for.

A headed goal from Rowett, 18, gave Cambridge a 1-0 fourth-round win against Oldham Athletic, of the Premier League, and a place in the quarter-finals of the competition for the first time. It could also have secured Johnson's promotion from caretaker manager to the real thing.

Crystal Palace restored some of the pride forfeited in last Saturday's 5-0 defeat at Liverpool by earning a 1-1 draw on Merseyside. Crystal Palace, with just one win from 17 League games and the subject of rumours that Steve

Coppell, their manager, is about to depart for Sunderland, took the lead through a goal from Chris Coleman 11 minutes into the second half.

Despite having two youngsters, George Ndash and Rob Bowry, making their first full appearances, Crystal Palace looked to have sprung a surprise until Mike Marsh converted a penalty to equalise in the 77th minute.

Crystal Palace's commitment was never in doubt and the uncompromising nature of their tactics upset Graeme Souness, the Liverpool manager. Never one to shrink a challenge in his own playing days, it seemed a case of the pot calling the kettle black to hear Souness say: "The game of football is different to what I saw against Arsenal. If that's what it's about, I'll look for another job."

All Coppell, keen to avoid questions about his future,

said was: "We were hard but I do not think we were that dirty. What would Graeme have us do? Go back to Anfield, not compete and not get beaten again."

Souness was especially upset by an incident which resulted in David Burrows, the Liverpool defender, being carried off after a collision with Gareth Southgate. Burrows spent the night in hospital and is expected to be out for up to 12 weeks, after sustaining ligament and cartilage damage to his left knee.

The Liverpool manager felt that Brian Hill, the referee, had been overly lenient about the challenge and about other incidents. Souness said: "Obviously I have to be very careful what I say about the referee — very careful. What I will say is that I am deeply disappointed. He let a lot of things go on which I have not seen during my time back in England."

Hendry is aiming to prevent burn-out

By Phil Yates

THE participation of Stephen Hendry, the defending champion, in the 1993 Matchroom European snooker league was thrown into doubt yesterday, despite a press release from Matchroom stating that Hendry would be one of the eight players involved.

Ian Doyle, Hendry's manager, said: "Stephen does not want to play because he wants to concentrate on his (WPSA circuit) tournament commitments. I have promised to talk to Stephen again, but I don't think there will be a change of heart."

Hendry, 23, has made a miserable start to the season, failing to win any of the opening six events. It seems that with a hectic post-Christmas schedule he is anxious to avoid burn-out and jeopardise his chance of retaining the Benson and Hedges Masters title in February and the world championship in April.

Even so, his league commitments do not appear arduous. Of his seven matches, two occur in early January, after nearly a month's break from the circuit.



Hendry: doubtful

Duncan trapped on slippery slope

FROM DAVID POWELL IN VAL D'ISÈRE

RONALD DUNCAN, Britain's No. 1 downhill skier, is planning to retire at the end of the season unless his results on the World Cup circuit improve. Injured, unfit, and badly out of pocket, Duncan was a despondent figure here yesterday as he finished nearly five seconds off the pace in practice for the first downhill of the winter on Saturday.

While the leading racers can pick up £20,000 for a win, Duncan expects his season to cost him £10,000. "I am getting married on December 22 and that has clarified my thinking," he said. "It's win or stop time. I have been poking around within range for a few years and I want to keep going. But it's not worth it when you are playing that much money."

Duncan's personal sponsors pay bonuses for top-15 World Cup finishes but he has only once qualified, when he was thirteenth in Åre, Sweden, three years ago. His best position last season was 21st. While he approached last season with optimism, he begins this one still suffering from a long-standing back injury.

"Because of my back, I could not get out of bed on my thirtieth birthday in Septem-

ber and suddenly I felt very old," Duncan said. He managed only ten days' training before arriving here, then missed two more when his back locked after a long car journey. "I am not really in it at the moment. I am just trying to get some downhill miles under my feet," he added. He hopes to ski into the money over the second half of the season.

Sponsorship of the British team would be an alternative way to keep Duncan in the World Cup but, in the present economic climate, that seems unlikely. The recession has had a devastating effect on British Ski Federation (BSF) sponsorship, a financial plight worsened by the Sports Council's reduction of its grant by £25,000.

The end of Drumbie's five-year sponsorship, worth £100,000 a season, has left the BSF without a main sponsor. The coaching staff has had to be cut and Duncan is having to pay — through private sponsorship and help from his parents — for the employment of a personal ski serviceman and coach, which costs £15,000 for the season. He has had to give up his London flat and is living out of a suitcase.

BOXING

Armour needs courage and luck

FORTUNE certainly favours brave Johnny Armour. The courage and determination of the Chatham bantamweight was rewarded with a stroke of luck that won him the Commonwealth title last October (Srikumar Sen writes). He will need all his courage and luck when he defends against Albert Musankabala, of Zambia, tonight at the Lewisham Theatre, London.

If Armour had not caught Ndaba Dube with a cracking

right hook in the last 11 seconds, he would not have won the Commonwealth title. It was doubly fortunate for Armour that the referee called a halt while Dube was still on his feet. Had Dube decided to take a rest on his knees for a count of eight, he would have been able to finish the contest without further mishap and won. At the time Armour was trailing by five rounds.

Musankabala, 30, won a bronze medal in the Com-

monwealth Games of 1982 and has had 23 professional contests to Armour's nine. Of his 19 wins, 16 have finished inside the distance.

Luckily for Armour, the Zambian's chin does not seem solid. His three defeats have been inside the distance. He faded when stopped by Daniel Ward, of South Africa, and, under Armour's relentless pressure, he could fold again. Armour, however, is the east-east man in the world to hit.

Italian court permits trial over injuries

Rome: The High Court in Italy has ruled that football players can bring criminal prosecutions against opponents who cause injury by dangerous play. The ruling was made on Tuesday in a case brought by an amateur player who suffered a broken leg when he was fouled in a match in April 1985.

A local court initially found the player who committed the foul guilty of involuntary wounding but the sentence was overturned on appeal. (Reuters)

□ Vinnie Jones was yesterday granted another seven days by the Football Association to decide on an appeal against his fine of £20,000 for his part in the video, *Soccer's Hard Men*.

Spartak plea for fine at worst

Moscow: The Russian football federation said yesterday it hoped Uefa, the European governing body, would fine Spartak Moscow for allegedly fielding an ineligible player in the Cup Winners' Cup rather than expel the club from the competition.

Uefa is investigating whether Spartak's Mikhail Rusayev was under contract to a German club when he played in the side that beat Liverpool in the second round of the cup last month.

The Russian federation president, Nikita Simonyan, sent a telex to Uefa on Tuesday replying to its questions. "We hope the Uefa decision will be favourable and the matter will be limited to Spartak paying a fine," he said.

"We do not think Spartak should be expelled after it beat Liverpool and other teams." If Liverpool were to be reinstat-

ed, they would be following Leeds United, the league champions, who were awarded a first-round rematch against VfB Stuttgart after the German side included four foreign players in its squad for the second leg instead of the maximum three.

Rusayev also played for Spartak when they beat Avenir Beggen, of Luxembourg, in the first round of the Cup Winners' Cup.

He rejoined Spartak in June from Oldenburg, in the second division, but German officials suggested the former Soviet international had broken key transfer rules.

A German federation spokesman said Rusayev, 28, had left Oldenburg without completing any formalities. Simonyan, however, said the midfielder player had not been playing as a professional.

"We told Uefa that Rusayev

was in Germany under the status of an amateur footballer and his transfer to the Bundesliga was on an amateur basis," he insisted.

□ Belgrade: The Yugoslav prime minister, Milan Panic, has made another plea to Fifa, the world governing body, not to ban Yugoslavia from the World Cup qualifying tournament.

Panic has written to Fifa ahead of tomorrow's executive committee meeting asking them to overturn an earlier decision to expel Yugoslavia.

Fifa expelled Yugoslavia from the qualifying competition for the 1994 World Cup on October 1, after twice extending the deadline, in line with United Nations sanctions against Belgrade for its role in the Bosnian civil war.

The decision is expected to be formally ratified by Fifa's executive committee in Zurich tomorrow. (Reuters)

GOLF

US cracks down on slow players

THE United States PGA Tour policy board has adopted tougher, more stringent guidelines involving slow play on professional tour events.

"The players said, 'Make it tougher, and we did,'" Deane Beman, the tour commissioner, said yesterday after a meeting of the tour's policy-making

body. He said the new guidelines are subject to ratification by the policy board early next year.

The guidelines reduce from 45 to 40 seconds the time a player is allowed over a shot. Under the new rules, a player would be warned after he was deemed to be out of position and had taken more than 40 seconds over a shot.

On the second violation during a round, he would be penalised one stroke and fined \$1,000 (about £660). With the third violation, he would be fined another \$1,000 and penalised a second stroke. The fourth violation calls for disqualification.

Under present rules, a player is subject to a \$500 fine on the second violation, \$500 more on the third and another \$500, plus a two-stroke penalty on the fourth.

Beman said the new rules should increase the pace of play on professional tour events by "10 to 20 minutes a round". (Agencies)

FOOTBALL

NEVILLE OWEN: Premier division: First division: Fulham 0, Queens Park Rangers 1.

WORLD CUP: European qualifying group 4: Ireland 0, Bulgaria 2 (at Tel Aviv).

SCHOOLS MATCHES: Westminster 2, Charlton 5; Lancing 0, Tottenham 2; Queens Park Rangers 0, Tottenham 2; Tottenham 2, Queens Park Rangers 0.

ALDOUS: Tottenham 2, Queens Park Rangers 0; Tottenham 2, Queens Park Rangers 0; Tottenham 2, Queens Park Rangers 0.

POWERS: Tottenham 2, Queens Park Rangers 0; Tottenham 2, Queens Park Rangers 0; Tottenham 2, Queens Park Rangers 0.

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BASKETBALL

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NBA): Atlanta Hawks 110, Indiana Pacers 107; Charlotte Hornets 111, Boston Celtics 101; New York Knicks 101, Portland Trail Blazers 88; Washington Wizards 110, San Antonio Spurs 107; Phoenix Suns 108, Chicago Bulls 105; Seattle SuperSonics 110, Orlando Magic 102; Sacramento Kings 117, Los Angeles Lakers 110.

SCOTTISH LEAGUE: Premier division: Dundee 1, Rangers 2; Dundee United 2, Perth 1; Dundee United 2, Perth 1; Dundee United 2, Perth 1.

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POWERS: Tottenham 2, Queens Park Rangers 0; Tottenham 2, Queens Park Rangers 0; Tottenham 2, Queens Park Rangers 0.

BOWLS

CONTRAST: C&S Insurance Scottish bowls championship: First: D. Hendry (Paisley) beat A. McEwen (Aberdeen), 7-5 (2-1, 3-2, 4-3, 5-4, 6-5, 7-6, 8-7).

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ICE HOCKEY

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NHL): New Jersey Devils 5, Toronto Maple Leafs 3; Pittsburgh Penguins 7, New York Islanders 3; Minnesota North Stars 3, Ottawa Senators 1; Los Angeles Kings 4, Chicago Blackhawks 3; St. Louis Blues 5, Hartford Whalers 4; Edmonton Oilers 3, San Jose Sharks 1.

WISCONSIN SCOTTISH INTER-DISTRICT CHAMPIONSHIP: Scottish Ladies 17, Glasgow 7 (at Richmond).

TOUR MATCHES: Newcastle v. Fife University.

CLUB MATCHES: Edinburgh Wanderers 7, Braemar 0; Glasgow 17, London Irish 1.

SCHOOLS MATCHES: Clackmannanshire 1, Perth 0; Perth 0, Perth 0; Perth 0, Perth 0.

WISCONSIN SCOTTISH INTER-DISTRICT CHAMPIONSHIP: Scottish Ladies 17, Glasgow 7 (at Richmond).

CLUB MATCHES: Edinburgh Wanderers 7, Braemar 0; Glasgow 17, London Irish 1.

RUGBY UNION

WISCONSIN SCOTTISH INTER-DISTRICT CHAMPIONSHIP: Scottish Ladies 17, Glasgow 7 (at Richmond).

TOUR MATCHES: Newcastle v. Fife University.

CLUB MATCHES: Edinburgh Wanderers 7, Braemar 0; Glasgow 17, London Irish 1.

SCHOOLS MATCHES: Clackmannanshire 1, Perth 0; Perth 0, Perth 0; Perth 0, Perth 0.

WISCONSIN SCOTTISH INTER-DISTRICT CHAMPIONSHIP: Scottish Ladies 17, Glasgow 7 (at Richmond).

CLUB MATCHES: Edinburgh Wanderers 7, Braemar 0; Glasgow 17, London Irish 1.

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FOOTBALL

7.30 unless stated

PONTING CENTRAL LEAGUE: First division: Liverpool 1, Manchester City 7 (0); Manchester United 1, Sheffield Wednesday 1; Walsley 1, Walsley 1.

Second division: Hull 1, Wigan 0; Clackmannanshire 1, Perth 0.

OTHER SPORT

BOWLS: Scottish indoor masters (Glasgow):

PPA POSTAL CLIENTS - WITH THE HOLIDAY PERIOD APPROACHING AND TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT DUE TO POSTAL DELAYS, YOU ARE STRONGLY ADVISED TO POST EXTRA EARLY.

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BBC1

- 6.00 Ceebees** (84154) **6.30 Breakfast News** (4038338)
6.05 Kilroy Robert Kilroy-Silk chairs a studio discussion on a topical subject (221612) **9.45 Ross King** Game show. The guest is singer Barbara Dickson (s) (8208408)
10.00 News regional news and weather (3030512) **10.05 Playdays**. For the very young (r) (s) (864845)
10.30 Good Morning ... with Anne and Nick. Weekday magazine (s) (4519592)
12.15 Peckham Junction Judi Spross is joined by Rolf Harris (s) (8914884) **12.55 Regional News** and weather (8504822)
1.00 One O'Clock News with Philip Hayton. (Ceebees) Weather (17870)
1.30 Neighbours. (Ceebees) (s) (2149880) **1.50 Going for Gold**. The hilarious Henry Kelly introduces another round of the general knowledge quiz with European contestants (s) (2149876)
2.15 Film: The Moon and Sixpence (1942, b/w). George Sanders stars as W. Somerset Maugham's middle-aged Londoner who decides to leave his wife, family and job to fulfil a lifelong dream of being a painter in Paris. A solid adaptation, directed by Albert Lewin (4795154)
3.40 Cartoon. Yankoo Doodie (281533) **3.50 Puppypod Tales** (948131) **3.55 Mooty** (s) (2480048) **4.05 Star Pets** (s) (7549241) **4.15 Get Your Own Back** Game show (s) (2414116) **4.30 Kevin & Co.** Episode four of the six-part comedy drama. (Ceebees) (s) (8204894)
4.55 Newsround (3631999) **5.05 Blue Peter**. Includes the latest news of the Blue Peter's Care Appeal. (Ceebees) (s) (2002113)
5.25 Neighbours. (Ceebees) (s) (200539). Northern Ireland: Inside Ulster (s) (87777)
6.00 Six O'Clock News with Anna Ford and Andrew Harvey. (Ceebees) Weather (38)
6.30 Regional News Magazines (90). Northern Ireland: Neighbours **7.00 Top of the Pops** (s) (8203)
7.30 Eastenders. (Ceebees) (s) (74)
8.30 CHORCE. An unusual variation on the wildlife-in-danger theme focuses on the black kitties and one of their favourite roasts. Stonecutters' island in Hong Kong harbour. It is a forest area and ideal for nesting but there is a snag. The island will soon be an island no longer when the gap between it and the Kowloon mainland is filled in. The kite population faces other hazards. A sewage works is being built where they used to fish and the bay is in any case heavily polluted. Narrated by the cameraman Barry Payne, the film is also a meditation on Hong Kong itself as it faces 1997. Payne is an enthusiastic guide but rarely has so many superlatives crammed into a short space. Thus Hong Kong is the world's most futuristic city with the world's busiest harbour and the kitties are the world's most magnificent birds of prey. (Ceebees) (s) (6551)
8.55 Staying Power. John Peel's brassy comedy starring Diane Lister as the newly widowed Annie, who is forced to give up her luxurious lifestyle and move in with Tiffany (Alison Lomas), her medical student daughter. (Ceebees) (s) (4086)
9.00 Nine O'Clock News with Maryn Lewis. (Ceebees) Regional news and weather (87777)
9.30 South and Jones. Last in the series of comedy sketches starring Mel Smith and Griff Rhys Jones. (Ceebees) (s) (23651)
10.00 One Foot in the Grave. Richard Wilson and Annabel Croft star in David Runkin's award-winning comic comedy. Victor is not looking forward to a weekend staying with friends who run a seaside boarding house. True to form, it proves anything but restful (r). (Ceebees) (22203)
10.30 Question Time introduced by Peter Sissons in Southampton. With MPs David Mellor and Peter Mandelson, Anthony Sampson and Irene Candy, a former mayors of Southampton (12425)
11.30 The Magic of Music. The first part of the concert recorded at the Bristol Hippodrome. Mark Webb and Mark Rattray sing numbers from popular musicals (s) (75319)
12.30am Weather (576452) Ends at 12.35
2.15 BBC Select: Executive Business Club (53991). Ends at 2.45

BBC2

- 8.00 Breakfast News** (5560048) **8.15 Westminster** (5568135)
9.00 Six Scottish Burghs. Professor Andy Macmillan addresses the architecture of Dunblane, the "Queen of the South" (42820)
9.30 Film: Busman's Honeymoon (1940, b/w). Lighthearted thriller starring Robert Montgomery as Dorothy L. Sayers's amateur sleuth Lord Peter Wimsey. His honeymoon with Janet Vane (Constance Cummings) is cut short by the discovery of a dead body in their holiday home. Arthur R. Woods directs (5744613)
11.05 Film: The Fugitive (1982, b/w).
 ● **CHOICE**: John Ford, as the BBC's Omnibus profile is making clear, liked to score any pretension to art while his film constantly contradicted him. Occasionally, as in *The Fugitive*, he was not only an artist but self-consciously so. Loosely adapted from Graham Greene's novel, *The Power and the Glory*, this is a film in which "style" proclaims itself on almost every frame. You see it in the extravagant visual pattern, with its studied compositions and dramatic shadows, the overt religious symbolism and the surging music. The film is a strange cross between Hollywood schmaltz and German expressionism and tends to be disliked by Ford admirers who prefer him in more self-effacing mood. But it is worth watching as a stirring oddity and for Henry Fonda's moving performance as the hunted Catholic priest (5027830)
12.40 Holiday Outings. Eamonn Holmes takes a holiday at Haggerston Castle Caravan Park in Northumberland (r) (1155084)
12.50 Armed Forces. Steve Taylor meets the police who have to deal with the increasing number of armed-carrying criminals (r) (1088749)
1.20 Pigeon Street. For the very young (r) (40887408)
1.35 Six Scottish Burghs. A portrait of Egin (37757628)
2.00 News and weather. (8552493) **2.05 Michael Barry's Choice**. Vegetarian (18974574) **2.15 Advice Shop**. For consumers of welfare and public services (5372023)
3.00 News and weather (7025406) followed by **Westminster Live** (9475651) **3.50 News**, regional news and weather (8263319)
4.00 Catchword. Game for wordsmiths, hosted by Paul Coia (s) (13)
4.30 Behind the Headlines. Political discussion (15)
5.00 Plunder. Film director Michael Winner delves into the BBC's archives (r) (4830) **5.30 Food and Drink** (r). (Ceebees) (s) (87)
6.00 Film: Timberjack (1953). Starring Henry Cavill and Vera Ralston. Ponderous action drama set in Montana's forests. Directed by Joe Kane (53425). Wales: Inside Europe 6.15 *Kickstart* 6.30 *Mosaic* 7.00 *Advice Shop*
7.30 First Sight: Kicked Out of School. A report on the exclusion of children from school, which has reached epidemic proportions in parts of London and the south-east (1). Northern Ireland: The European Challenge. Wales: Dad's Army; East: Matter of Fact; Midlands: Midlands Report; North: North-east and North-west; Close Up North; South: Southern Eye; South-west: Close Up West; Close Up West. Followed by *Advent Calendar*. The third of 24 memorable moments from past Christmases gleaned from the BBC's archives
8.00 The Essential History of Europe. The fourth of 12 films on the countries of the EC focuses on the Republic of Ireland (5393)
8.30 Top Gear. Includes a visit to the Motorcycle Show at the NEC, Birmingham, and a test drive of the new Renault Safaree (r) (22628)



Back to school: Joanna Lumley and Dawn French (8.00pm)

- 9.00 Absolutely Fabulous**. Frantic and funny comedy series starring Dawn French and Joanna Lumley. (Ceebees) (s) (6318)
9.30 Horizon Special: The Truth About Sex. The first set of results from the National Sex Survey, the largest study of sexual behaviour in Britain (s) (501512)
10.20 10 x 10: Paradise Flash Bar. The tragic-comedy story of a girl coming to terms with adult sexuality (r) (461203)
10.30 Newsnight with Sue Cameron (790664)
11.15 The Late Show. Arts and media magazine (s) (403599)
11.55 Late Show. Arts and media magazine. The guests include West Priest, Apache Indian and the New York band Sonic Youth (s) (817593)
12.30am Behind the Headlines. Shown at 4.30pm (58278)
1.00 Weather (5942983). Ends at 1.10
3.00 BBC Select: RCN Nursing Update (15094). Ends at 4.00

ITV LONDON

- 6.00 TV-am** (5997999)
9.25 Keynotes. Music game show hosted by Alistair Duffell (6173406)
9.55 Thames News (8555593)
10.00 The Time ... The Place ... Topical discussion programme (8218574)
10.35 This Morning. Magazine series presented by Judy Finnigan and Richard Madeley. Today's edition includes an episode from the soap *Tuesdays and Thursdays* that offers advice on emotional matters, family health phone-in and ideas for both hand and machine knitters. With national and international news at 10.55 and regional news at 11.55 followed by national weather (23462357)
12.10 The Riddle. Puppet series for children (6674319)
12.30 ITN Lunchtime News. (Ceebees) (1514512) **1.05 Thames News** (4080271)
1.15 Home and Away. Australian family drama series. (Ceebees) (496970)
1.45 A Country Practice. Medical drama set in the Australian outback (s) (495241)
2.15 TV Weekly. Anne Diamond goes behind the scenes of popular ITV and Channel 4 programmes while Barry Took dips into the archives (487222) **2.45 Take The High Road**. Soap set in the Highlands (816777)
3.10 ITN News headlines (7036512) **3.15 Thames News headlines** (7036512) **3.20 GP**. Medical drama about a suburban Australia practice (3833116)
3.50 The Rotties. Animation (r) (6661339) **3.55 Captain Jack and the Zoo Zone** (s) (5214593) **4.20 Rolf's Cartoon Club** presented by Rolf Harris (8199715) **4.45 Bad Influence**. Computer games series (5263715)
5.10 Blockbusters. General knowledge quiz game for teenagers, presented by Bob Holmes (1452870)
5.45 Early Evening News. (Ceebees) Weather (424864)
5.55 Thames News (r) (730233)
6.00 Home and Away. (r). (Ceebees) (25)
6.30 Thames News (8)
7.00 Emmerdale. Drama series set in the Yorkshire Dales. (Ceebees) (1995)
7.30 Jimmy's. Real-life dramas concerning the patients and staff of St James's University Hospital, Leeds (r)
8.00 The Bill: Fireworks. PC Stamp has to resort to old-fashioned policing after more than 100 British Rail detonators are stolen and a child is badly injured when one of them explodes. (Ceebees) (7319)
8.30 This Week. (Ceebees) (9154)



Contempt of court: James Groot passes judgment (8.00pm)

- 9.00 Rumpole of the Bailey**. In this last of the series Horace begins his day badly at the dentists - but it gets worse when he loses his temper with appearing before Mr Justice Oliphant (James Groot) and finds himself on trial for contempt. Can "the man who must be obeyed" save his skin? Starring Leo McKern and Marion Mathie. (Ceebees) (s) (2951)
10.00 News at Ten. (Ceebees) Weather (27099) **10.30 Thames News** (377512)
10.40 Aide Update 92. Ruby Wax introduces a film looking at the link between AIDS in Europe and Africa. (Ceebees) (640970)
10.50. Entertainment guide to London and the south-east (s) (75522)
11.25 Prisoner. Cell Block H. Australian drama series set in a woman's detention centre (238600)
12.20am Alfred Hitchcock Presents. Two stories of suspense - *Houdini on Channel 4* and *The 13th Floor* (1157588)
1.15 Stephen King's World of Horror. A feature length programme looking at famous horror stories and movies (551276)
3.00 Kojak. The New York policeman searches for the whereabouts of a missing six million dollars. Starring Telly Savalas (r) (73920)
4.00 Motorsport Special. Racing from Thruxton (59077)
4.30 America's Top Ten (r) (s) (72907)
5.00 Videoflash (r) (44363)
5.30 ITN Morning News (75438). Ends at 6.00

CHANNEL 4

- 6.00 Cartoons** (28884) **7.00 The Big Breakfast** (93533)
9.00 You Bet Your Life. American game show (s) (6161661)
9.25 Film: Babes on Broadway (1941, b/w). Lovely Busby Berkeley musical starring Mickey Rooney and Judy Garland (8448945)
11.35 Crime Does Not Pay: Miracle Money (1938, b/w). A quack doctor resorts to murder to save his reputation (8113406)
12.00 The Parliament Programme presented by Anne Perkins (17512)
12.30 Sesame Street (54796) **1.30 Take 5** (35405)
2.00 Film: Fourteen Hours (1951, b/w).
 ● **CHOICE**: Henry Hathaway's gripping documentary-style thriller is based on the true case of a man who threatened to throw himself off the seventeenth floor of a Manhattan hotel. Richard Basehart plays the would-be suicide, with Paul Douglas as the traffic cop who tries to talk him out of it. It is one of Basehart's best performances, vividly conveying the nervous exhibitionism of a man near the end of his tether. Apart from the will-he-won't-he? suspense, which is expertly sustained, the film is also notable for its portrait of the crowd which gathers to watch the figure on the ledge. Black humor intrudes as taxi drivers bet on the time Basehart will jump. Barbara Bel Geddes and Agnes Moorehead feature in supporting roles and there is a bit part for Grace Kelly, making her film debut (610336)
3.40 The Three Stooges in Sister Downers (1937, b/w) (5233628)
4.00 Family Pride. Drama series about a Midlands Asian family (s) (89)
4.30 Fitts for One. Fast-moving general knowledge quiz (s) (83)
5.00 The Oprah Winfrey Show. A discussion on privacy and in particular Ms Winfrey's own secret engagement (s) (3527113) **5.55 The Magic Roundabout** (r) (78845)
6.00 The Word - Access All Areas (s) (48) **6.30 Gamesmaster** (28)
7.00 Channel 4 News. (Teletext) Weather (884574) **7.50 Comment** (788616)



Pursuing runaway Asian women: Tahir Mahmood (8.00pm)

- 8.00 The Black Bag: The Bounty Hunter**. The first of a two-part documentary about a Huddersfield-based man who tracks down Asian women who have run away from home (s) (8861)
8.30 Rising Damp. Celebrations are in order when an engagement in the Rigby household is announced (r) (7785)
9.00 Critical Eye: Do Families Need Fathers?
 ● **CHOICE**: Elizabeth Woodcraft argues that since so many men are wife bashers and child abusers, or both, families are probably better off without them. This provocative thesis is based on Woodcraft's experience as a family law barrister, her contention that domestic violence and abuse goes much wider than the reported cases and her assertion that men have had their own way for far too long. She finds enthusiastic support from three divorced women on *Timeside* and a battered wife who was forced to abandon the family home on Boxing Day. Woodcraft accuses the church, the courts and the politicians of failing to address the matter. She has little to offer by way of solutions, though one of her contributors suggests that children may develop just as happily in lesbian households as in traditional family units (9703)
10.00 The Big Battalions. Episodes three of the five-part drama about South and Lancashire. (Teletext) (s) (3583)
11.00 Cheshamford 192. Comedy set in Northern Britain (r) (s) (478832)
11.35 The Spirit of Freedom. Bernard-Henri Levy examines the response of intellectuals to world events. Subtitled (570222)
12.30am Dispatches (r) (6947278)
1.20 Film: In Old Mexico (1936, b/w). A Hopalong Cassidy western starring William Boyd. Directed by Edward T. Venturi (6944741). Ends at 2.30

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VARIATIONS

- ANGLIA**
 As London except: 5.30-6.30 The Young Doctors (5353116) **5.40-6.40 Survival** (1422070) **6.30-7.00 Anglo News** (217599)
10.30 Sunday Show (777222)
11.30 WideWorld (103390) **11.40 News** (8208408)
12.30am BBC Select: The Rob Hood of El Dorado (19100)
BORDER
 As London except: 2.45-3.15 Highways and Hobbies (516777) **3.20-4.20 Young Doctors** (5353116) **5.10-6.40 Home and Away** (1452670) **6.30-7.00 Lookaround** (60) **6.30-7.00 Scotland's** (s) (8208408)
7.20-7.50 The Rob Hood of El Dorado (19100)
11.30 Night Heat (1107510) **1.10 The Young Doctors** (5353116) **1.40 Film: Court Five and De** (504073) **3.20-4.20 Young Doctors** (5353116) **5.10-6.40 Home and Away** (1452670) **6.30-7.00 Lookaround** (60) **6.30-7.00 Scotland's** (s) (8208408)
7.20-7.50 The Rob Hood of El Dorado (19100)
CENTRAL
 As London except: 1.15 A Country Practice (48970) **1.45-2.15 Home and Away** (1452670) **5.10-6.40 Home and Away** (1452670) **6.30-7.00 Lookaround** (60) **6.30-7.00 Scotland's** (s) (8208408)
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Selectors stand by decision on Gower

Dexter predicts
defeat for the
MCC dissidents

BY IVO TENNANT

TED Dexter, chairman of England's selection committee, expressed concern yesterday that the future over the dropping of David Gower might undermine the confidence of players chosen ahead of him for the tour to India. His stricture came in the light of MCC being forced to hold an extraordinary general meeting to debate a resolution of no confidence in England's selectors.

"I find it irritating that 260 members, a small minority, are trying to speak for the majority," he said. "I fully expected them to force a meeting, although I don't know what their motivation was. I would say the resolution is very unlikely to be carried."

Dexter, who is an honorary life member of MCC (and eligible to vote), said he would not be going to the extraordinary meeting, which will be held in January, and that the only way Gower would be included on England's tour would be in the event of injuries. Gower is going to India as a television commentator.

Dexter said: "If the motion is carried, MCC's president will be forced to put a similar resolution to the Test and County Cricket Board (TCCB), possibly at their

March meeting. MCC would have one vote among 20 and would be proposing overturning a selection system set up only four years ago and subjected to a complete review in 1990.

"If you were a betting man, you would not get odds of less than 1,000-1 on this happening. I have spoken to plenty of people in clubs and pubs who take a different view to these MCC members."

Alan Smith, chief executive of the TCCB, said yesterday he had "every confidence" in Dexter and Graham Gooch and Keith Fletcher, who helped select England's tour party. Fletcher, the new England manager, reiterated that Gower's exclusion did not mean it was the end of his career.

"I respect everyone's right to an opinion but I think the members are taking this issue a bit far," Fletcher said. "If it is correct that an extraordinary meeting will cost £17,000, then I just think that money could be better spent."

"We thought at the time that we had the best squad and still do. We have to consider the future and players such as Mike Atherton, Graeme Hick and Neil Fairbrother."

The TCCB is to hold its winter meeting next week,

when four of the 18 first-class counties, in addition to MCC, would need to deliver a vote of no confidence in the selectors to force the TCCB into holding its own special meeting.

Smith has received 2,000 letters of protest over Gower's exclusion that were originally sent to *The Observer*, whose editor, Donald Treford, is one of the leading MCC signatories.

Treford intends to write to all MCC's 17,400 members, outlining the views of the dissent group. This is in spite of Gower distancing himself from their motion. Speaking from Australia on BBC Radio yesterday, Gower said the decision to hold a special meeting astonished him.

"The selectors do their job in good faith and must be concerned now with getting players fit for the tour," he said. "At least this has made me think that if I was disappointed, others were as well."

Dennis Oliver, spokesman for the signatories, said Gower should dissociate himself from their cause. "I have never met him and he has his own future in the game to consider. But there should be some accountability for selectorial meetings — it seems the world and his wife go to them. I expect to win our case by a handsome majority."

Roy Edey, the Kent member who is attempting to bring about a vote of no confidence in the TCCB over the introduction of coloured clothing in the Sunday League, is seeking support from members of all the other first-class counties.

Edey also wants to reverse the TCCB's decision to use black sightcreens and white balls.

John Major, the prime minister, has written the foreword to England's bid, which runs to 20 pages, to stage the 1995 World Cup. Submissions to the International Cricket Council (ICC) were opened at Lord's yesterday. India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka have also placed a combined bid.

Border fined, page 36



Going to ground: McKenzie, the Glasgow hooker, gains possession and looks for support from his pack as he tries to set up an attack against Scottish Exiles, who won 17-7 in the McEwan's inter-district game at Richmond yesterday afternoon. Report, page 36

A piercing experience

FROM BARRY PICKTHALL AT CAPE HORN

EIGHT of the British Steel Challenge crews have successfully rounded Cape Horn, leaving only Paul Jeffes and his InterSpray team and their rivals on Rhone Poulenc to appreciate the euphoria which comes from performing the feat.

Yesterday, Jeffes said he had hopes of sighting the Horn late last night, but a change in the wind, as sudden as the storm that lashed the area on Tuesday, will almost certainly delay his arrival until later today.

Peter Phillips and his Rhone Poulenc crew finally left Port Stanley at 02:00 GMT yesterday, following the arrival of new parts for their mast, which had been delivered to the Falklands by an RAF transport plane. They expect to take their turn at running through the infamous waters on Saturday.

"We still have some rig tuning to do, and will do that as we sail down towards the Horn," he said over the radio. The most dramatic rounding was by the Group 4

Securitas team, at the height of the storm. "We have had a fantastic run down," their skipper, Mike Golding, said. "We were creaming along, with the asymmetric kite up, in 25 to 30-knot winds when the boat was hit by a 45-knot gust. It sent us flying. How many can say they have been surfing off Cape Horn?"

Further ahead, the decks of other yachts have been turned into improvised operating tables as crew members lined up to have their ears pierced. A gold earring in the left ear has been the mark of a Cape Horner since the earliest days of sail.

After the entire crew of the *Pride of Teesside*, including their doctor, had their lobes punctured with a sailmaker's needle the supply of studs ran out. "We had to improvise by cutting up a gold bracelet," said Sue McKichan. Her sister, Alison, sailing on the second-placed yacht *Commercial Union*, found it all very hard to believe. "Whoever talked you into it? You must all be mad. It must look like

Emergency Ward Ten over there," she said.

Golding said that while his Group 4 crew would also be wearing earrings in Hobart, these would be of "the clip-on variety."

Others had more original ways of celebrating once they were safely round. David Spratley was spotted wearing nothing more than a woolly hat, while taking his turn at the wheel of *Heath Insured*, by the commander of the local Chilean naval base, who was over-flying the yacht. "Mad. He was standing naked at the wheel, reading a newspaper in 40 knots of wind," he reported.

LEADING POSITIONS at 1800 GMT yesterday with miles to Hobart: 1, *Nuclear Electric* (J. Chisholm), 4,000; 2, *Commercial Union* (P. Phillips), 5,000; 3, *Coopers & Lybrand* (V. Goss), 5,100; 4, *Veritas* (L. Goss), 5,150; 5, *Smith Steel* (J. Taylor), 5,175; 6, *Heath Insured* (A. Doreen), 5,180; 7, *Pride of Teesside* (S. McKichan), 5,200; 8, *Group 4* (M. Golding), 5,272; 9, *InterSpray* (P. Jeffes), 5,472; 10, *Rhone Poulenc* (P. Phillips), 5,717.

Report sent via STC satellite telephone. Positions supplied by British Telecom.

Champagne on ice, page 4

Noades cuts pay
at Crystal Palace

BY LOUISE TAYLOR

RON Noades, the Crystal Palace chairman, has imposed a ten per cent cut in salary on all administrative, ground staff and other club employees, apart from players, at Selhurst Park.

Nor does the reduction apply to Steve Coppell, the manager of the struggling Premier League team, and Alan Smith, his assistant. Noades told staff of his intention at a meeting on Monday.

Noades said he acted because average gates are down 3,000 a match and lottery income has fallen. So much for the promised riches of the Premier League.

"I had the choice of making people redundant or imposing a ten per cent cut across the board," Noades said yesterday. "I chose the latter and hope that if our financial position improves in the second half of the season then we may be able to reinstate the money."

"Everybody would rather

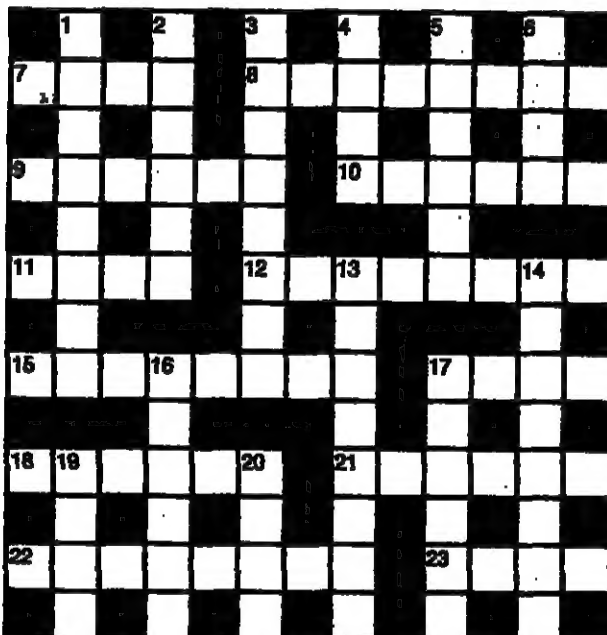
see redundancy because they don't think they would be affected. I've told them all that I hope they stay. But all departments are showing a drop because of the recession and this decision affects everyone from me down, apart from the manager, his assistant and the players."

The deeply unpopular cut was imposed against a backdrop of uncertainty at Palace — the feeling is that Coppell could soon be packing his bags and departing for Sunderland where Malcolm Crosby is not expected to survive for much longer.

Players at Barnet, the third division club, were yesterday debating whether to make a mass transfer request after the dismissal on Tuesday of Barry Fry, the manager, by Stan Flashman, the controversial chairman.

Edwin Stein, Fry's assistant, said that he had turned down an offer from Flashman to take over as manager.

CONCISE CROSSWORD NO 2961



ACROSS
7 Yes (4)
8 Pull out (8)
9 Bowler's target (6)
10 Worldly wealth (6)
11 Discard (4)
12 Bravery commendation (8)
15 German miss (8)
17 Group (4)
18 Ski-ing house (6)
21 Vietnam rice delta (6)
22 Plane full width (8)
23 Litter smallest (4)

DOWN
1 Figure out (8)
2 Congested (6)
3 Octopus "arm" (8)
4 Cool (4)
5 Yield (6)
6 Rose perfume oil (4)
13 Scottish flats block (8)
14 Holy orders candidate (8)
16 Evaporation loss (6)
17 Bread producer (6)
19 Salute (4)
20 Best (4)

SOLUTIONS TO NO 2960

ACROSS: 1 Coral 4 Temper 8 Obnoxious 9 Mug
10 Too 11 Concordat 12 Shrug 13 Comma 16 Car-
atop 18 Gut 20 Lax 21 Hostility 22 Reserve 23 Night
DOWN: 1 Clout 2 Rancour 3 Lexicographer 4 Thorns
5 Misconception 6 Timid 7 Regatta 12 Secular
14 Mugging 15 Mousse 17 Nexus 19 Tryst

WORD-WATCHING

By PHILIP HOWARD

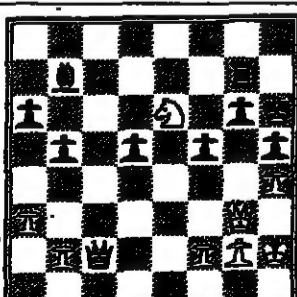
SICSAC

a. Crenellation in heraldry
b. The crocodile bird
c. So so, not bad

GRIMGRIBBER

a. A male witch or warlock
b. Legal jargon
c. A cobbler's pincers

Answers on page 36



Solution on page 36.

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WORD-WATCHING

By PHILIP HOWARD

DINIC

a. Making a loud noise
b. A child's top
c. Pertaining to dizziness

SORBILE

a. A foul temper
b. Easy to persuade
c. Drinkable

Lyric Fantasy fetches 340,000 gns

BY RICHARD EVANS, RACING CORRESPONDENT

LYRIC Fantasy, whose average racing speed of 37.58 miles per hour marked her as one of the fastest two-year-old racehorses for half a century, was sold for 340,000 guineas at Newmarket yesterday.

The "pocket rocket", as Lord Carnarvon's flying filly became known, was knocked down at Tattersalls' December Sales to Paul Shanahan of the Irish-based Ashdown House Stud. Shanahan was bidding on behalf of a Kuwaiti consortium. "She will stay in training and run next year. Whether it will be here or in Ireland I can't say," Shanahan said.

As the moguls of the bloodstock world mingled in a packed sales ring beforehand with the simply curious, it was far removed from a year ago, when Lyric Fantasy was

bought as a yearling for 12,500 guineas.

Since then the small filly showed that she had a heart and engine which made a mockery of minor details like size and bloodlines. After a winning introduction at Windsor in April, the only time Lyric Fantasy did not start favourite, she revealed phenomenal speed to win the National Stakes at Sandown before becoming the first two-year-old to break the 60-second barrier at Ascot in the Queen Mary Stakes.

After a lucrative success in the Newbury Super Sales Sprint, the race for which she was originally bought, Lyric Fantasy went on to become the first juvenile filly to win the Nunthorpe Stakes at York. Her only defeat came when

she was arguably past her best in the Cheveley Stakes.

Asked why he was selling her, Lord Carnarvon, racing manager to the Queen, said: "Whoever you are, if you enjoy racing and breeding horses, you have to sell sometimes to replenish the coffers. I have always done it. Whether she stays longer distances or not, you cannot take away her speed and her records."

Despite her obvious merits, critics have not been slow to point out Lyric Fantasy's defects. Was she so precocious, she would not train on? Would her size hinder her ability as a broodmare? And what of her mediocre breeding?

Those doubts, combined with the unknown reserve put on her by Lord Carnarvon, were the talk yesterday as seats

and standing room were fully taken in the ring long before David Pim, the auctioneer, opened the sale.

"Probably one of the fastest two-year-olds we have seen in a generation... sure to be the top rated filly... broke the record at Ascot, broke the record in York... the first two-year-old filly to win the Nunthorpe. What more can I say about her," he said.

Bidding opened at 100,000 guineas and was fast and furious before Pim brought down his hammer. "Ashdown House Stud," he said simply. The drama lasted around five minutes... slightly less than the 371.22 seconds it took Lyric Fantasy to complete her six races.

More racing, page 37

Football finds Olympic solution

FROM DAVID MILLER IN ZURICH

THE tug-of-war between João Havelange, the Brazilian president of Fifa, and Juan Antonio Samaranch, the president of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), over the eligibility of senior professional footballers for the Olympic Games, is likely to be resolved here tomorrow by Fifa's executive committee. The leaders are believed to have negotiated a compromise when they met privately on Tuesday.

The proposal, I understand, is that Fifa, football's governing body, should retain the controversial under-23 age limit that operated in Barcelona, and which resulted in a low-key tournament, lacking in glamour.

The tournament for 1996 in Atlanta will allow the introduction of three senior, "over age", which should keep both sides happy in a situation that previously seemed insoluble on the one

hand, European and African nations, simultaneously engaged in continental championship qualifying competitions with senior and Olympic teams, would use under-23 squads in the Olympic event and then upgrade them to the final competition, with star players who will add to public appeal.

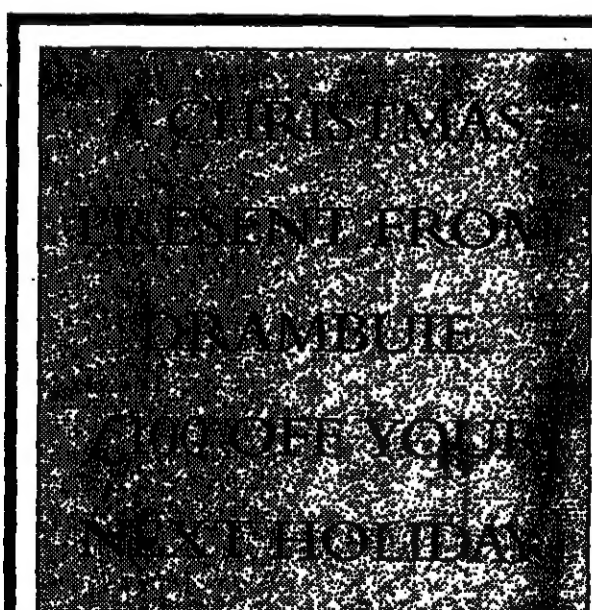
The contradiction for the IOC had been that while the leading professionals were competing in sports such as athletics, tennis and, in Barcelona, basketball, football was resisting in order to protect the status of the World Cup.

In the report to yesterday's Fifa press commission meeting here, it was admitted that this year's "Olympic tournament was not especially privileged", a nice euphemism for saying that the public gave it the cold shoulder. Only the appearance of Spain in the final against Poland ensured a respectable climax to the event. Samaranch was determined that Olympic football should include the

best, Havelange that the World Cup's prestige should not be diluted. The compromise, which the executive committee is expected to approve, would allow both sides to maintain face.

Also on the table for debate, I gather, is the inclusion of an indoor five-a-side tournament for Atlanta and a women's tournament for the Games of 2000.

The recent world five-a-side championship in Hong Kong, in which Brazil beat the United States 4-1 in the final, was a huge success, with capacity crowds and 11,000 at the final. With 367 goals in 40 matches, an average of 7.68 per match, the benefit of the change in the back-pass law was apparent. The average at the first tournament, in Holland in 1989, had been 5.43. It is to be regretted that England were not involved. What previously had been regarded as a fringe element of the game is becoming a development area, especially with the shortage of outdoor pitches.



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